OUTLOOK
and Independent

VOL. 158—No. 12

JULY 22, 1931

"Aggressive fighting for the right is the noblest sport the world affords."
—*Theodore Roosevelt*

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By George Raffalovich
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WITH OUR READERS

Public vs. Private Charity

To the Editor: *New York City*

SIR—I should like to have the privilege of correcting the main inference in your editorial of July 1st headed, "Test for Our Dole System," which has also been picked up by several newspapers throughout the country.

Discussing the forthcoming united fund-raising efforts in 376 cities of 25,000 or more population, which the President's Emergency Committee for Employment has asked the Association of Community Chests and Councils to stimulate, you assume that emphasis is to be placed upon private charity virtually to the exclusion of public appropriations. This is not so. Last year seventy-two per cent of all relief funds were provided through municipal and county appropriations. This percentage must be maintained or even increased to meet the aggravated needs of the coming winter, and the efforts of the Welfare and Relief Mobilization—the name which we have selected for the concerted movement—will be directed toward this end. In other words, private welfare and relief organizations, either through community chests or emergency committees, are to be requested to do their utmost, but at the same time the need for additional public appropriations is to be brought strenuously to the attention of municipal and county officials.

ALLEN T. BURNS.
Executive Director Association of Community Chests and Councils.

The Power Issue

To the Editor: *Newark, N. J.*

SIR—Your consistently liberal attitude toward most public questions makes all the more disappointing the faith you profess, in your editorial in the July 1st issue, in regard to state regulation of power companies.

Assuming even the wish, on the part of state regulating commissions, effectively to regulate the power companies, are they with their inadequate staffs, niggardly appropriations, and inferior personnel, a match for the alert, aggressive and expert representatives of the power companies, legal staffs with practically limitless resources and facilities behind them, since back of each local company there is usually the gigantic central organization, the holding company of which it is a subsidiary or affiliate?

To ask the question is to answer it. Furthermore, I am not prepared to assume the willingness of the regulating commissions to regulate. You know what the attitude of the New York commission was under Mr. Prendergast. If the public could not prove that a claim of the utility was unfounded, the utility's request was granted. The commission was not an advocate of the public's cause, but only a judge. If because of poor counsel like, let us say, Mr. Craig in the subway case in which he was rebuked by the Supreme Court, or because of inadequate proof, the public could not make a good case against the representatives of the utility, then that was just too bad. Things are not much better here in New Jersey, nor, as you must surely know, in most of the other states, especially in many of those in which public opinion is not so articulate or vociferous as in New York. I commend to your attention an article in the June 24th issue of *The Nation*, under the heading, "The Farce of Power Regulation." If such things happen in Pennsylvania, one of the largest and most populous states in the Union, what chance has the public when its cause is in the hands of state regulatory bodies?

Another shock was to read, in the same editorial, your reference to the "grave abuses that would undoubtedly result from politics-ridden services." Why do you say undoubtedly? Has this been the result in Ontario, in Watertown, in the northwestern states in which there are publicly owned power plants? So far as details are available in public reports they are being operated as efficiently as privately owned plants, not to say with resulting lower costs to the consumer. Here in New Jersey we have a water-works commission that is, and has been for many years, constructing gigantic water-works enterprises for the northern part of the state. No charge of politics has, to my knowledge, been brought against the commission. On the contrary, its efficient and far-seeing plans, its wisdom in foreseeing the district's needs and preparing for them in advance, have been the subjects of praise and commendation. Its water rates are so low that the charges to consumers by the municipalities which it serves are substantially lower than those charged by private water companies in other cities. Nor do you have to cross the Hudson for an example. Your own Catskill water-works project, for supplying the needs of New York City, is an undertaking that compares favorably in every respect with the achievements of a private company. And even if the public bodies do make mistakes—certainly private enterprise is not perfect. Private enterprise did nothing to forestall the present debacle, and it is powerless to get out of it. Furthermore, in the rare cases where inside stories become public, it is quite evident that the management is not above selfish and underhand methods, and that the interests of the enterprise and the stockholders are not always first. A recent example is the story revealed in the suit by minority stockholders of Bethlehem Steel, seeking to enjoin the merger with Youngstown Steel and to force the refund of bonuses paid to officers.

However, there is no need to go on. Public ownership and operation may have their faults at present; but they can do as well for the public as private ownership now does, and with additional experience will do much better. The objection that public services will be politics-ridden is as out-dated now as the faith in state commissions to protect the public's interest.

HARRY BERLIN.

Agricultural Conditions

To the Editor: *Minneapolis*

SIR—I have read with interest and much concern the article, "The Passing of King Wheat," in the OUTLOOK of June 10th. The only inference that can be drawn from this article is that all is well with agriculture with the single exception of the wheat producer. This is so far from the actual truth of the situation that it gives a wholly unreliable picture of the economic condition of American agriculture.

A magazine of such wide circulation as the OUTLOOK exerts an influence upon public thought and opinion that is most important. It seems to me that the OUTLOOK must be unwilling to lend itself to the dissemination of grossly erroneous conclusions regarding so serious a matter as our national farm problem.

We here in the very heart of the most fertile and productive diversied farming area in America are disheartened that the idea that "only wheat farming is sick" should be accepted as the truth. I sincerely hope that the OUTLOOK will be fair to agriculture and will be glad to correct such an erroneous impression.

H. M. HARDEN.

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"NAUGHTY!"

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OUTLOOK
and Independent

July 22, 1931

▸▸ Trend of the Week ◂◂

▸▸*Wickersham Report, No. 4*

WHEN the Wickersham commission, now out of official existence, bobbed up with its third report since the celebrated one on phohibition, the country paid little heed. The first of the three found crime statistics incomplete, inaccurate and untrustworthy and recommended that the federal government and the individual states gather them more carefully and systematically. The second report, on prosecution, found an undesirable link between politics and prosecutors' offices and recommended that it be broken. The third is devoted to federal treatment of child delinquents. In it the commission finds that the federal government, both in courts and prisons, is tragically behind most states in handling cases involving child delinquents and recommends the transfer of such cases to state and local jurisdiction. Offenses against the prohibition law were responsible, the report shows, for about half of the federal sentences.

Like its two predecessors, the third minor report is mainly a statement of the obvious. Not that obvious reports are necessarily worthless; their value is largely dependent upon the prestige of those who make them. The last three reports of the Wickersham commission might have commanded wide attention and stimulated immediate remedial action had the commission been careful of its reputation. The commission, however, threw its prestige to the winds in January when it returned a prohibition report whose wet findings were capped with dry recommendations. The reason why it is getting little credit for saying the obvious about minor problems is that it refused to say the obvious about the major problem of prohibition. The commission's history has become merely a sad story of what might have been.

▸▸*Federal Fact-Juggling*

THERE HAS BEEN so much juggling of official figures in Washington that Ray O. Hall's charges concerning the recent report on the "Balance of International Payments" should at least be accorded a hearing. This is the document which President Hoover so generously christened "the most important single communication in the entire field of any country's international economic relations." It was largely prepared by Mr. Hall, an expert in the Commerce Department's Bureau of Finance and Investment, and was credited to him in the text. It transpires, however, that Mr. Hall does not want the credit but does want the public to know that his manuscript was "so altered in the editing as to falsify figures and also to suppress vital truths discovered during my investigation."

American imports provide a case in point. Mr. Hall contends that the customs statistics overvalued the 1930 imports by $175,000,000, that he attempted to make the correction and that he was dismissed from the Department when he refused to sign the report suppressing it. He points to other mangling, a conspicuous instance being the deletion of his statement that, in the tremendous increase in our tourist traffic to Canada, "the importance of prohibition in the United States will be doubted by nobody." He declares that the conscientious labors of governmental experts "are being set to naught to protect expediency, often by shallow and frivolous conceptions of expediency."

Here we have a truth, whatever the merit of Mr. Hall's specific charges. There is a link between politics and fact-finding in Washington, which, obviously, should be cut asunder. As facts —intricate economic and financial facts —become of more and more importance in determining and measuring political policies, the cutting of this link becomes more and more imperative. The nation will owe much to the man or group of men eventually performing the operation.

▸▸*Slapping at the Shorts*

PRESIDENT HOOVER, having scored abroad with his moratorium, tries a trick on the home field and fumbles pathetically. That, in essence, is the story of his July 10 attack on speculators who, says he, "are selling short in our commodity markets, particularly in wheat." Mr. Hoover maintains that this activity has but one purpose, "to depress prices," that it "tends to destroy returning public confidence" and "deprives many farmers of their rightful income." Hence, in the name of patriotism, he desires that "these gentlemen" desist.

How feeble this manoeuvre seems when stacked up against the facts. The principal facts are that the Hoover farm relief policy—the $500,000,000 Federal Farm Board policy—has failed, that prices of agricultural products are down in the cellar, that the farmers are down in the mouth and that the Administration is in dire need of a scapegoat. So the White House finger points at the short-sellers, the bear-raiders, the bogey-men of American trading who,

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says Mr. Hoover, "take a profit from the losses of other people."

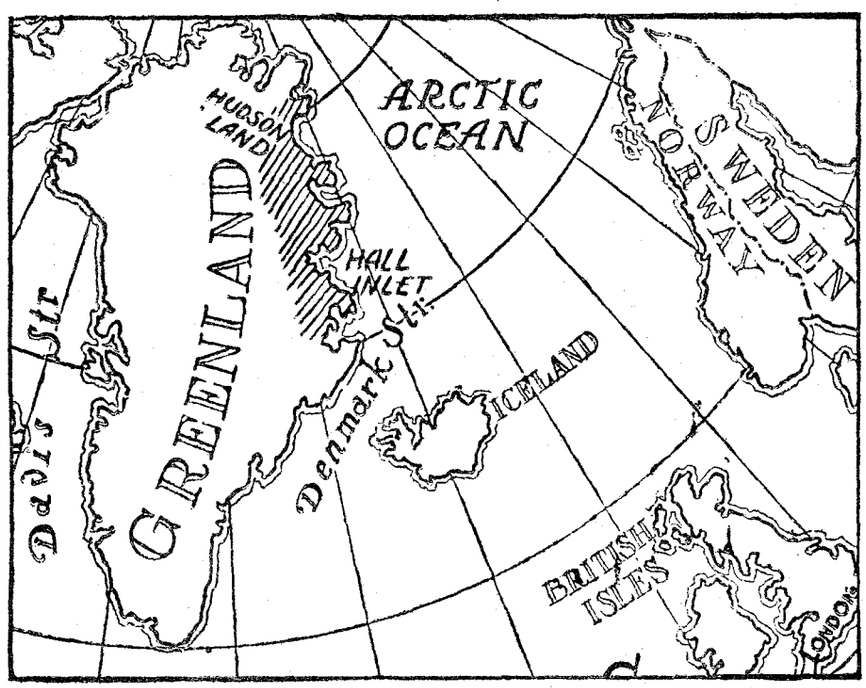
If Mr. Hoover is not trying to confuse the farmers he is badly confused himself. He knows—or should know—that two of the major reasons for rock-bottom wheat prices—overproduction and accumulated surpluses—are directly connected with the failure of his Farm Board's two policies, first, to induce farmers to reduce their wheat acreage, and, second, to peg wheat prices by government purchases. The failure of the first was shown, on the very day of Mr. Hoover's statement, by the Department of Agriculture's estimate that this year's wheat production would exceed that of last year. The failure of the second, notable all along as Farm Board purchases were followed by price recessions, was especially notable on July 10, when wheat closed at 52 cents a bushel, but half the price at which the Farm Board had set out to peg it. But Mr. Hoover makes no reference to these facts—naturally enough, since the failing Farm Board is his own. Instead, he ignores them and pitches into the short-sellers.

He also ignores the facts that traders had just as soon make money buying long as selling short and that bear movements are every bit as justifiable as bull movements. The impression he leaves is that hard times on the wheat farms are the product of malicious men in the wheat pits, which is simply not so. Mr. Hoover has merely delivered himself of another politico-economic utterance of the kind in which he specializes.

▸▸*Dispute Over Greenland*

THOSE who used to sing "From Greenland's icy mountains" usually did so with complete assurance that Greenland was owned by Denmark. The history book said so, as well as the maps in the geography, which, by the way, often made Greenland as large as the United States. It is actually about a third as large. Now no one can say who owns Greenland until a decision has been rendered by the World Court.

In its proclamation of July 10 the Norwegian government officially occupied Greenland's eastern coast on the basis of a recent expedition by two Norwegian students. But Denmark promptly protested and plans to complain to the World Court that Norway has violated the treaty of 1924. The old dispute was quieted—Greenland was considered Norway's before Denmark got control more than a century ago—when Denmark guaranteed Norway certain rights on the eastern coast for twenty years on the understanding that both nations would view the area as no-man's-land. To a nation unaccustomed to having another claim part of her back yard the present clash may seem dangerous to peace. As a matter of fact, however, there is no more thought of war in Denmark than in Norway, where Foreign Minister Braadland says that the annexation is purely technical, taken with a view of proceedings by the World Court.



N. Y. Herald-Tribune

AREA UNDER DISPUTE
Shaded section indicates territory recently occupied by Norway

The conflict would hold out little interest but for its World Court angle. In June we pointed out that the value of the Court should have been apparent to all Americans when it was asked to rule on such a troublous proposal as the Austro-German customs union. Norway and Denmark now demonstrate again how useful the Court can be. The moral is that the United States Senate should ratify the protocols providing for American adherence as soon as it convenes in December.

▸▸*A Sick Industry*

THE TWENTY TO FORTY thousand miners on strike in Ohio, Pennsylvania and West Virginia offer evidence that the soft-coal industry is still in a wretched state. While the Philadelphia *Public Ledger* points out that the industry's cutthroat competition "has led to making of prices for coal below the cost of production and the consequent wholesale slashing of wages," the Louisville *Courier-Journal* complains of maladjustment in freight rates and the New York *Times* stresses oil and gas competition which have diminished demand and unregulated wage scales which "have made it impossible to stabilize production costs." In truth, the soft-coal industry is beset by many ailments.

Yet certainly that is not news. The industry has been ailing for years, as every one knows. It was known in 1926 when President Coolidge spoke to Congress about the problem and in 1928 when a sub-committee of the Senate Interstate Commerce Committee found the bituminous coal fields the scene of poverty, vice, brutality and, in general, of conditions "dangerous to the best interest of citizenship." Other reports and investigations have been had from time to time until the illness of the industry has become proverbial. Thus, the current strikes should not be considered merely as evidence of a temporary condition but as an eloquent indication of a fundamental difficulty about which something must be done. That something must be more than the mere provision of food for the strikers' families and mediation for their present controversy with the operators.

While no one seems quite clear as to

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what, exactly, should be done, a way of finding out has been suggested by President Lewis of the United Mine Workers of America—not to be confused with the West Virginia Mine Workers and the National Mine Workers' Union, both of them involved in the present strike. On June 11 Mr. Lewis asked President Hoover to call a joint conference of operators and miners for the purpose of finding a common basic understanding. Mr. Hoover referred this suggestion to the Secretaries of Commerce and Labor but to date no joint conference has been summoned, though the secretaries have talked with the operators. Now Mr. Hoover might well take the further step proposed by Mr. Lewis. A conference is not a panacea for every sickness, but it would be a good first step in the diagnosis and cure of this one. Mr. Lewis's suggestion offers Mr. Hoover an excellent chance to follow up his recent determined and intelligent action abroad with similar action at home.

▸▸*Plight of Germany*

PRESIDENT HOOVER'S moratorium plan was not enough, by a long sight, to save Germany from financial chaos. This became perfectly evident in the week following the Franco-American war-debt accord. Although by no means the cause of Germany's turn for the worse, the

Keystone

MAD AT THE MOVIES
Theodore Dreiser, author, notably of "An American Tragedy"

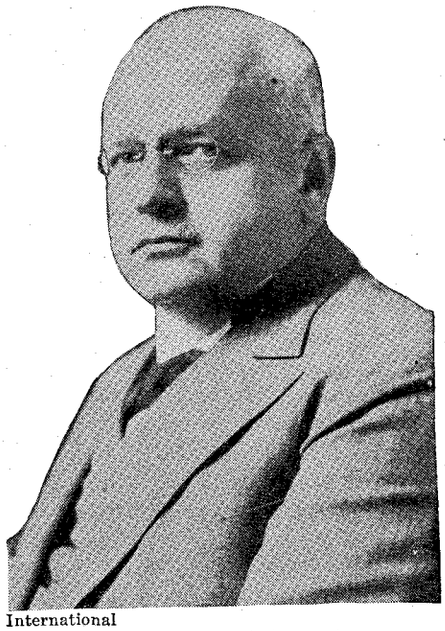
moratorium move certainly played its part as far as the private creditors of Germany were concerned, first, through calling attention to her financial straits and, secondly, thanks to the French determination to modify the plan, by delaying the process of providing Germany with much-needed credit.

Thus confidence in the German financial structure steadily lessened while the British government was summoning the Young plan signatories to a conference to settle questions raised by the Hoover plan but not provided for in the necessarily limited Franco-American agreement. And thus withdrawals of private credit to Germany got under way, weakening the German banks and causing the German people to lose confidence themselves and attempt to withdraw their bank deposits and to export their capital by buying foreign exchanges. The inevitable result of this panicky situation within Germany was a further reduction in the confidence of foreign investors. Under the pressure of all this the German government, moving Heaven and earth to secure credit abroad, was forced at home to suspend all trading on the security exchanges and temporarily to close all banks save the central Reichsbank.

The root of the trouble lies in the fact that for years Germany has been making her reparations payments, as well as balancing her excess of imports over exports, by borrowing money abroad. From 1924 to 1930 her borrowings abroad amounted to 16 billion marks more than her loans abroad. It was Germany's ill luck that, as this importation of capital increased, the world-wide depression suddenly and materially limited the supply of foreign credit. Germany, having built herself up industrially, was left without markets for her goods but with her name signed to short-term notes of startling amounts. Naturally the broadcasting of her instability by the moratorium negotiations caused the holders of this short-term credit to call for payment. Hence Hans Luther, president of the Reichsbank, appealed for loans to the central banks of foreign countries. At this writing he had secured $100,000,000 through the Bank for International Settlements but that supply of credit will by no means meet the German demand.

▸▸*Dreiser Strikes Again*

THEODORE DREISER is in the ring again. This time his opponent is not Sinclair Lewis but the Paramount Publix Corporation and, in particular, the star director, Josef von Sternberg. Mr. Dreiser does not like the motion picture which has been made of his novel, *An American Tragedy*, under von Sternberg's



International

IN THE MIDST OF IT
Dr. Hans Luther, president of the German Reichsbank

direction. In fact, he hates it. He considers it a "libelous distortion." His attorneys have warned Paramount that injunction proceedings will be started if the film is produced.

As in the case of the recent Dreiser-Lewis fisticuffing, it is hard to make head or tail of this bout. Particularly since a good bit of pettishness seems to exist between Dreiser and von Sternberg, regardless of the film in question. But the immediate, realistic reaction is, whatever gave Dreiser the idea that his book, which centers about a slow psychological development, would be faithfully presented in the movies? Has a novel of that sort ever been filmed without distortion? Presumably Mr. Dreiser knew as well as any one else what Hollywood proverbially does to sound novels. If he objected to a movieized version of his book, why did he sell it to the movies?

▸▸*Mr. Hoover Looks Abroad*

"I ATTACH the greatest importance to his [Secretary of State Stimson's] visit to Europe," said Premier Mussolini after discussing disarmament with Mr. Stimson in Rome. And so does President Hoover, or so it would appear. Mr. Stimson is now swinging through the capitals of Europe talking over the conference on land, sea and air armaments

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scheduled to open in Geneva on February 2. The subject seems to lie close to Mr. Hoover's heart. The American government has emphatically opposed the postponement of the Geneva conference, was the first to accept an invitation to attend it and as an extra gesture of good-will recently made public figures showing exactly what armaments America has.

Moreover, Mr. Hoover went out of his way to discuss disarmament in his speech before the International Chamber of Commerce two months ago and he has tried hard to tie up disarmament with his proposed moratorium on intergovernmental debts. In his statement of June 20 explaining his moratorium proposal he declared that "the burden of competitive armament has contributed to bring about this depression." We must find relief from this burden, he said in his statement of July 6 when France and the United States had finally reached their war-debt agreement.

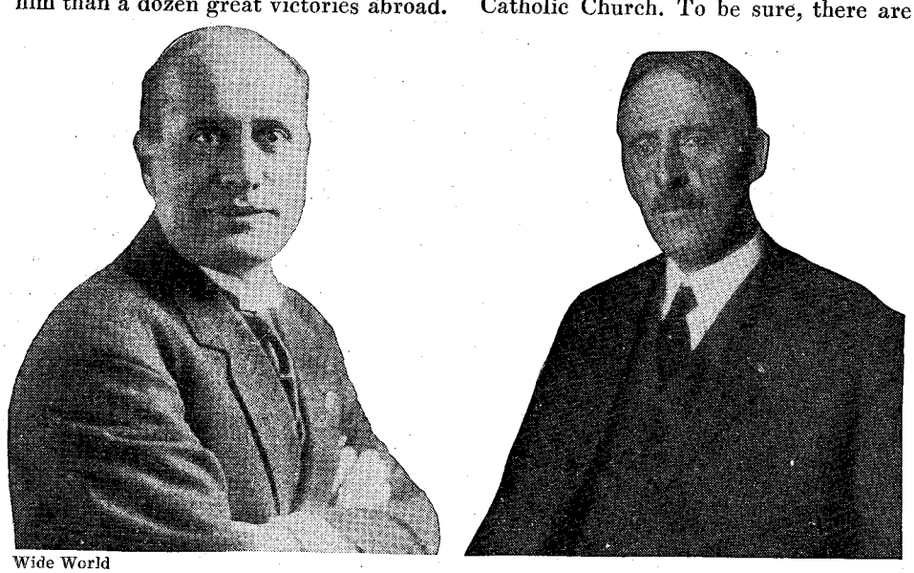
Evidently Mr. Hoover intends that his next important constructive move shall be made abroad, as his first one was, and shall concern the question of armaments. His debt holiday raised his stock in the United States considerably. Presumably a disarmament agreement, secured largely through pressure exerted by this government, would raise it again. A few successes in his foreign policies should offset some of the failures in his domestic policies. But it is a question just how much political value these successes would have. In all likelihood a single victory at home, over the farm problem, say, or the problem of unemployment, would be worth more to him than a dozen great victories abroad.

▶▶*Il Duce vs. Pope Pius*

A DEFINITE BREAK between the Vatican and the Quirinal seemed the logical consequence of the encyclical issued by Pope Pius on July 4 calling Fascism a "pagan worship of the state." A definite break seemed almost unavoidable five days later when Mussolini declared that membership in the Fascist party was incompatible with membership in any organization dependent upon Catholic Action, the group name given to 15,000 church clubs. Hence, no Fascist may belong to the Catholic Action clubs and hence, unless Mussolini and the Pope are merely attempting to out-bluff each other, the next few weeks may witness troublous times in Italy.

The fundamental difficulty in this long-standing dispute is that Italy is harboring two powerful systems with clashing ideals. The striking thing is that, with no little justice, each asserts that its sphere has been invaded by the other. It is plain that Fascism encroaches upon religion by diverting the emotional life of Italians to its own interests and, in general, by putting the state in the place of the church. Technicalities aside, it is equally plain that the Church will encroach upon Fascism, since the Catholic Action clubs will almost inevitably tend to become centers of political thought and activity. In another country this might not matter. In Fascist Italy it tends to produce a serious situation.

Mussolini, of course, may wholly or partly retract, but the point to be noted at present is that he has ordered a virtual boycott on the secular activities of the Catholic Church. To be sure, there are but a million or two members of the Fascist party proper, but his order means more than that none of these will belong to Catholic Action clubs. For, in the first place, there are about seven million members in the various Fascist organizations; in the second place, its youth program gives Fascism a means of growing until all Italy is enrolled and, finally, it has many legal methods and some extra-legal ones—castor oil, for example—of ridding non-Fascists of any desire to do anything displeasing to Il Duce. Evidently Mussolini has returned the Pope's blow with a harder one. The question now is whether the Pope will return Mussolini's blow with a harder one still.



Wide World

CHATTED OF CANNON
Premier Mussolini of Italy and Secretary of State Stimson

▶▶*The Democrats Turn Back*

THE DEPRESSION has had at least one fortunate effect. It has stopped the drift of the Democratic party toward the Republican tariff policy. Two years ago at this time we said that, while there never was a time when this country needed a low-tariff party more, there was no such party in existence. Since then the confidence of the Republican party that protection spells prosperity has weakened, and so has the tendency of the Democratic party to imitate the Republican position. It has become clear that our Alpine tariff walls played some part in bringing on the depression and a much larger part in perpetuating it.

To this fact we may attribute Senator Robinson's clever statement of July 7, reminding President Hoover that, since Democrats had waived partizanship and coöperated with him on his moratorium, he might well waive partizanship and coöperate with them in reducing tariffs. Naturally this brought indignant responses from Senator Smoot and from Senator Watson, the gentleman who predicted in June, 1930, that if the Hawley-Smoot tariff bill were passed we would regain the peak of prosperity within a year. Senator Robinson, however, merely replied that when Congress convenes an earnest effort will be made to reduce tariff rates. Needless to say, it will be made by the Democratic members.

The Democratic party made its last low-tariff stand in January, 1928, when forty-one Democratic Senators voted for a resolution declaring that "many of the rates in the existing [Fordney-McCumber] tariff schedules are excessive and that the Senate favors an immediate revision downward of such rates." Then came the Democratic campaign

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under the leadership of Governor Smith, generally supposed to have high-tariff sympathies. Hence the tariff plank in the Democratic platform was ambiguous. And hence many Democratic orators announced that the Democrats had abandoned their traditional low-tariff policy, though others denied it. The result was confusion, which persisted all through the debate on the Hawley-Smoot law, which Congress passed in June, 1930, and which displaced the Fordney-McCumber law. During that debate, Democratic legislators in general showed themselves less eager for high rates than Republican legislators, but still eager enough when the products of their own states were involved. It therefore seemed for a time as if there would simply be two high-tariff parties, which would have been highly unfortunate when it was so plain that, though we must buy abroad to sell abroad and must sell abroad to live in the American manner, our high tariff walls were bound to injure our foreign markets. This was plain even before the depression started, but it took the depression to make the country, and particularly the Democratic party, realize it afresh.

▶▶ *Refurbishing Liberty*

MAYBE it isn't circumspect to be quaint about a lady who is 305 feet tall, weighs 225 tons, measures thirty-five feet around the waist, is forty-five years old, has fingers three and a half feet in circumference and lips three feet wide, but what we started to say is that the Statue of Liberty, standing on Bedloe's Island in New York harbor, is about to receive a bath and a beauty treatment. Miss Liberty has been coming under criticism of late. It has been remarked that, because of an obsolete lighting system, she appears to have a double chin, ugly blurs on both sides of the face under the four-foot nose and other imperfections as well. So the bath to remove the grime which has been accumulating since she was unveiled in 1886 will soon begin and the beauty treatment, involving a $15,000 system of floodlights, will follow soon after. As a final touch new lights will be placed in the twenty-one windows of her crown—like jewels, you know. But perhaps that shouldn't be the final touch, after all. How would it be if as a final touch America should decide to refurbish not only Miss Liberty but also the Liberty she symbolizes? Of recent years we haven't been thinking much about Liberty because of being so busy thinking about Prosperity. Now that we haven't much of any Prosperity to think about, suppose we begin thinking about Liberty again?

Remarkable Remarks

Conditions governing the Remarkable Remarks contest will be found on Page 384.

It only takes intelligence, courage and good-will to make a prosperous world. —OWEN D. YOUNG.

Mrs. Walter Olcott, South Manchester, Conn., $5 prize.

We have so much money we don't know what to do with it.—ARTHUR BRISBANE.

J. J. Gleason, 3728 Emerald Ave., Chicago, Ill., $2 prize.

We can reason with some degree of assurance that the longer a black night has lasted, the nearer it is finished. —WICKES WAMBOLDT.

W. C. Allen, Waynesville, N. C., $2 prize.

The judgment of the public, like divine justice, is always right.—MRS. ELEANOR PATTERSON.

Miss Helen E. Deinlein, 2735 Ridge Road, Evanston, Ill., $2 prize.

It is always a temptation for those who have power to abuse it.—HENRY L. DOHERTY.

Mrs. Lillian F. King, 812 Lindenwood, Topeka, Kansas, $2 prize.

I never knew a golfer who had a bad character.—JOHN D. ROCKEFELLER.

Jacob Dress, 75 Douglass Ave., Providence, R. I., $2 prize.

Most Americans are born drunk and really require a little wine or beer to sober them.—G. K. CHESTERTON.

Wm. T. Merritt, 521 Twelfth St. N. W., Canton, Ohio, $2 prize.

A successful night club can never be conducted really successfully on water. —TEXAS GUINAN.

Alan Collipriest, Montpelier, Idaho, $2 prize.

I think those who will not be interested in me after my marriage will be insignificant in number.—RUDY VALLEE.

Miles Lynch, 7511 Kingston Ave., Chicago, Ill., $2 prize.

Modesty is not for me.—GABRIELE D'ANNUNZIO.

Mrs. Olive M. Hagar, 5540 Pershing Ave., St. Louis, Mo., $2 prize.

He [Rudy Vallee] is just an ordinary man to me.—MRS. RUDY VALLEE.

Mrs. S. B. Staley, Montpelier, Idaho, $2 prize.

A married woman seldom acquires dyspepsia from being fed too much applesauce.—HELEN ROWLAND.

Miss Mary Carroll, Park Crescent Hotel, 150 Riverside Drive, New York, $2 prize.

▶▶ *An Unstable Sea-Floor*

THOUGH THE CABLE DISPATCH in the press said that the recent earthquake beneath the North Sea near the British Isles caused the North Sea floor to rise more than a hundred feet, a scientist would say, instead, that the rising of the North Sea floor caused the earthquake. This would be putting the horse where it belongs—before the cart rather than behind it.

If one's time scale is only the duration of written history, then England always has been an island, but on the geologist's time scale she was part of the continent of Europe less than ten thousand years ago. Neolithic man roamed and hunted dry-footed across the English channel—to commit an Irish bull, for there was no Channel—as late as 7000 B. C. His hunting ground likewise extended to all the area between England and Denmark over which English trawlers range and on which England's navy fought the Battle of Jutland against German ships. All that land now lies two hundred feet beneath the waves and, geologically speaking, is subject to very rapid fluctuations in depth. That is, changes may occur as often as every few hundred years. Geologists think the cause of these changes is the gradual relief of stresses in the earth's crust due to the comparatively recent—again geologically speaking—unloading of Northern Europe's great deep cap of ice after the last Ice Age.

Far out in the North Sea from England's shores are found the stumps of forests of neolithic age. It is possible also to dredge up marsh plants and bones of animals from the shallow sea bed and there is indubitable evidence that the Rhine and the Thames met as confluents in it and, as one stream, flowed northward through this former land to empty into the ocean nearly on the latitude of Scotland. Changes in the

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North Sea bed similar to the one reported certainly have been occurring for ten thousand years, of which the span

International

LITTLE WHITE BROTHER
Senator Hawes of Missouri, friend of the Filipinos

of the age of science and accurate observation represents only about one per cent.

▶▶*New Battle-Lines*

JUDGING from the way the Filipinos have been taking him to their hearts, Senator Harry Hawes of Missouri could get anything he wanted in the Islands. His difficulty, however, lies in getting what he wants at home—in this instance the passage of his bill, now pending in Congress, to provide for a Filipino plebiscite to determine whether the "little brown brothers" actually want independence. Judging, again, from the way they received Senator Hawes, there is evidently little doubt that they do want independence, but there is some doubt that they will get it. The signs indicate that Philippine independence will soon be the subject of a first-class fight in Washington. We may as well face that fact, more especially the fact that, when the question of Philippine independence is reëxamined here, it will be reëxamined on entirely new lines.

Washington now contains a powerful, adroit and peculiarly successful beet-sugar lobby which seems determined to free the Philippines in order to free the American sugar industry from competition with Philippine sugar, which now escapes our tariff. Hence the question of Philippine independence, so long dull and academic, seems likely to become both lively and practical. The issue will not be imperialism against self-government, as of old, but one conception of our national self-interest against the self-interest of a section. Before long there will be cries from the latter side that the Philippines are a millstone, from the former that they are a valuable market for American products—a point emphasized in the annual report issued on July 12 by Governor General Davis, who also pointed out that free trade with the United States, which signifies ownership by the United States, had saved the Islands from bankruptcy. It will be strange to see American legislators, who are normally imperialistic, tackling this kind of argument head on.

▶▶*Dry Gives Wet Testimony*

PROHIBITION COMMISSIONER WOODCOCK believes that the prohibition laws as they stand are unenforceable. And when the Prohibition Commissioner himself believes that these laws are unenforceable, what further proof is needed that they should be either modified or repealed?

To be sure, Mr. Woodcock does not say in so many words that the dry laws, being unenforceable, call for modification, but he does say this in effect, without seeming to realize the meaning of his statement. The Prohibition Bureau's policy, he says, is to leave the average violator, or in Mr. Woodcock's words "the private violator," alone, concentrating on the commercial violator, or professional bootlegger. "There are statutory and constitutional protections surrounding the purely private violator," he says. "So the choice of the commercial violator is dictated both by good policy and necessity. This means that we leave the purely private violator to his own conscience and the forces of education. Against the commercial violator, the laws should be effective, but the private violator is the peculiar field for education."

This is simply saying that the laws as they stand won't work, which is equivalent to saying that they should be revised. For surely Mr. Woodcock does not advocate nullification; surely he does not believe that the statute books should contain laws which the authorities have no intention of enforcing. The dry laws as they stand do not confer immunity on the "private" violator—whoever heard of a "private" lawbreaker? It's only Mr. Woodcock who is doing that, and he has no right to. The laws prohibit the manufacture, sale, possession, transportation, importation or exportation of intoxicating beverages by any one, "private" violators included, and not merely by commercial violators alone. If, as Mr. Woodcock says, it is impossible to enforce these laws strictly, well and good. In that case, let's repeal them or modify them.

▶▶*Communism Falls Again*

WELL, we see where Stalin has failed, the Soviet government fallen, the Five-Year Plan crumbled and the whole Communist experiment in Russia collapsed again. Time was when the man, the government, the plan and the whole experiment used to fail, fall, crumble or collapse every few weeks. Nowadays it's every few months. Soon it will be every few years. And then eventually, perhaps, critics of the Russian experiment, in and out of the press, will stop overthrowing it periodically, realizing, as they should have realized long ago, that it is apparently going to work, at any rate after a fashion. Meanwhile, we shall continue to be told that Russia is swinging sharply toward the Right and

Wide World

HEADMAN
Joseph Djugashvili, whom Lenin named Stalin

continue to wonder how it is that, if that is the case, she remains so close to the Left.

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The same old critics have seized in the same old way on Joseph Stalin's speech of June 23. To understand Stalin's so-called "New Economic Policy" correctly it is simply necessary to remember that Russia is not fussy about the means she uses to reach her Communist ends. Or as Walter Duranty, Russian correspondent of the New York *Times,* has put it, "Stalinism aims at using capitalist weapons to achieve collective or Socialist results." With this in mind, let it be noted that in his June 23 speech Stalin gave his sanction to piece work, unequal wages, the return to the normal six-day week, the establishment of individual responsibility for workers and industrial directors, the extension of clemency to old-régime engineers and the creation of a proletarian intelligentsia. Stalin has not lost sight of the Communist goal. He has merely approved the plan of reaching it by a series of short-cuts.

More than half of all the farms in Russia had been absorbed into collectives on the first of July, and the process is proceeding apace. Does that sound as if Russia were swinging toward the Right? Truth is, Russia is becoming capitalistic no more than your old home town became socialistic when it put in a water system. Indeed, less so. For the socialistic water system is permanent. The new Russian measures are temporary.

▷▷*In Brief*

IF YOU NEED further proof that as far as it went President Hoover's debt moratorium was really an excellent move, note that it has been heartily denounced by Senator Brookhart of Iowa . . . . Special cable from Germany to the New York *Times:* "A sensational invention through which the speed of bullets fired from ordinary rifles is doubled and their effect tripled has become known here." Chicago papers please copy . . . . A pastor's fervent prayer in the State Senate at Montgomery defeated a bill to legalize the sale of near-beer, but observers breathlessly agree that Alabama had an extremely narrow squeak.

Washington Under the X-Ray

ENTIRELY ASIDE from their content, which in the main is shrewd, entertaining and valuable, there is considerable food for thought in two anonymous books just off the press. One, published on July 16, is entitled *Washington Merry-Go-Round;* it is an "inside" story of persons and events in social and political Washington. The other, published on July 17, is entitled *The Mirrors of 1932;* it is a series of strong, skilful and untouched photographs of most of the active or potential candidates for President—Hoover, Smith, Coolidge, Roosevelt, Morrow and so on.

If you feel that here and there these books are indiscreet, harsh or what not, that is your opinion and you are entitled to it. But it does not change their significance nor detract from their distinction and usefulness. For what these books set out to do is to tell the truth, and, within the libel laws and the canons of good taste, the whole truth about American politics and politicians. That, unhappily, is something that is not attempted very often. The one weakness in most of our newspapers and press services today is that, though their news-gathering facilities grow ever more extensive and efficient, and though they would scorn to tell untruths, they stick too closely to the surface of things. They deal too much with appearances, too little with underlying realities. This is particularly true of their treatment of national politics.

There is no one phrase that will explain why this is so. But among the reasons for the phenomenon are, first, the fact that they fear to be barred from news sources, news being, of course, the principal commodity they have to sell; blocking their access to the news, even temporarily, is equivalent to blocking a clothier's access to cloth. Again, they stick to the surface because that is the easiest and pleasantest course. It involves them in no rows, loses no advertising and brings no readers' outcries.

BUT, whatever the reason, the result is unfortunate. It lowers the level of politics, not into vulgarity, true, but into dullness, and it lowers the standards for office-holders. For it teaches the voters to be satisfied with superficialities and deadens their interest in the conduct of their government. Hence it encourages political leaders to avoid courageous and candid action and to go in for pussy-footing instead. This, in turn, tends to make the newspapers more cautious and superficial than ever, and so the thing goes on, in a vicious circle. Eventually it may reach the point where the well-posted person finds little to interest him in his daily newspaper. He knows that its puff-portraits of public men are inaccurate and knows that events taking place in his time are not always as pretty and sweet as they are reported to be.

We do not mean that the answer is scandalous books or articles of the *Strange Death of President Harding* type. It isn't. We take it that there is a happy mean between gush and scurrility, that it is immediately recognizable to the discriminating and that it is what the great body of informed and intelligent people wish to read. May we say that this happy mean is the goal of the editors of the OUTLOOK? In the phrase of the day, this journal's function is to provide its readers with "the low-down," which means no more than to tell the whole truth as one sees it. But it must be the low-down not merely on personalities but on policies and principles. Else it becomes mere gossip.

THE healthy thing about the two books here mentioned is that, in his own way and according to his own judgment, each of the authors is out to tell the whole truth in so far as he is able. Possibly you will feel that occasionally they miss the mark, but that is of comparatively little consequence. Truth-telling is still their aim, and an admirable aim it is. If a dozen books of this kind were published every year, demagogues would grow less rankly in our political garden.

So far as it relates to personalities alone, their truth may be unimportant. It is certainly not important if, as the *Washington Merry-Go-Round* reports, Ruth Bryan Owen is said to have thrown roses to Representative Andrew from the gallery of the House, or if General Summerall tends to expound the glories of a military career when he sits at dinner beside young and beautiful ladies. But it is important when this book bluntly reminds us that every dry-by-implication statement Mr. Hoover has made "has been followed by an undercover wet 'interpretation.' This occurred when he gave out his pronouncement on the Wickersham commission prohibition report and after his acceptance speech at Palo Alto, California, in the summer of 1928." It is also important to be reminded by *Mirrors of 1932* that, "no matter who the next President will be, he will be the choice of a convention

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which discharged its solemn and historic duty to the popping of corks, the tinkling of cocktail shakers and the swish-swish of set-ups." Statements like these do not deal with mere personal eccentricities alone. They relate to policies and principles, or the lack of them, and they are either omitted or insufficiently emphasized by the daily press.

THE EDITORS.

Backstage in Washington

WASHINGTON, D. C.

WE DONT LIKE to say we told you so, but we note that the explosion which we predicted for the White House has occurred, and it was not in the boiler room. Mr. Hoover now has a gay group of gangsters just outside his door in the persons of the press writers assigned to observe his comings and goings and to interpret him to the people who elected him. More important still, and more to the President's disadvantage, the young men's employers, including proprietors of Administration newspapers and press associations, are standing squarely behind their correspondents in the duel in which they find themselves engaged with Messrs. Hoover, Richey and Joslin. It is easy to exaggerate immediate happenings, but I doubt if the President has ever hurt himself more than in his present attack on the press, and, of equal importance, his investigation of his Secret Service staff. It gives weight to all the criticism of his pettiness which has been set down by many who heard it as due to the imagination of the press men.

To be fair to Mr. Hoover, it is possible to sympathize with his position. Nobody, not even a President, likes to live the life of a goldfish, exposed to prying eyes and eavesdropping ears. Had he taken his stand on that ground, and sought to negotiate with representatives of the press corps, the "writing fellows," as Calvin Coolidge used to call them, would have coöperated. Instead, he declined even to comment on workable suggestions they presented for the establishment of more reasonable relations between the press and President. Worse still, as if with cold deliberation, he refused to acquiesce to the simple request that he let them know in advance when he was leaving for the Rapidan on week-ends. They, on their part, had to make plans for their offices and for their families; they had to pack, pass up the roast beef they were to buy for Sunday dinner and call off the engagements for Saturday evening—or the opposite if they learned that the President did not intend to go to Virginia. Incredible as it may seem, the President has deliberately made it difficult for the newspapermen by withholding his plans until a few minutes before he was to start. Although the rest of the White House knew long in advance, the correspondents were given fifteen minutes to prepare on one occasion, and fifty on another.

Despite protests that he slacken his speed over winding and crowded roads, he has paid no heed. He insists upon driving at a breakneck speed, although it would seem that this falls into the category of lawlessness against which he inveighed when he created the Wickersham Commission. It was a simple story in the conservative New York *Times*, I am informed, which brought the nasty situation to a head. Mr. Turner Catledge, the *Times* correspondent, begging the pardon of Sleuth Richey, did not get his information from the Secret Service staff or by snooping; he got it by an arithmetical computation any sixth-grade child could have figured out. A clever boy, Mr. Catledge did not even state the speed at which the presidential cavalcade swept along; he simply gave the distance and the time in which it was covered. Indeed, he pictured the President as quite a dramatic figure on the dusty dash back to the Capital to take command of the moratorium negotiations. Although it is impossible to give a heroic cast to Mr. Hoover, Mr. Catledge, by implication, likened him to Phil Sheridan or the latter's ride across roads no great distance from those Mr. Hoover burns up.

It was then that Mr. Richey, obviously with Mr. Hoover's approval, if not at his insistence, began his inquisition of Secret Service men and correspondents. It was then, too, that Secretary Joslin attempted to impose a censorship on all news around the White House, especially if it pertained to trivialities anent the President. Both the correspondents and their employers resented this move, and now it is war. The newspapermen will, I wager, play up every item of news of this sort, and several outstanding journals, as well as one press association, have given their men standing orders to uncover at least one personal and trivial story a day. There is one thing in all this that Mr. Hoover, even though he may be accustomed to subservience from certain Republican editors, has forgotten: Presidents come and go but the daily newspaper goes on forever, or almost forever. He is barking up a bigger tree than any of his own California redwoods.

In considering Mr. Hoover's earlier experiences with the press, I derive some amusement from this opera bouffe. When he was Secretary of Commerce, and only a candidate, his door was open to the last and lowliest cub to reach the Capital. He would take time off from the nation's business to converse with them and capture them. It is not too much to suggest that he was made by newspapermen, and 90 per cent of the corps were his boosters when he set out for the presidency. I doubt if he could muster as many as ten to say a good word for him now. High place often affects people strangely, but not in recent memory has it so undone a man as it has Herbert Hoover.

Of course, the chief sufferer will be, not the press, but the President. What I cannot understand is why his advisers, and especially ex-correspondent Joslin, do not walk into his office, throw discretion out on the White House lawn and inform him that he is making the mistake of his career, that he is hurting nobody but himself, that he is giving the American people a glimpse of himself that might better be withheld. Viewed from this angle, it is not the scribes, but the sycophants, who are doing him dirt.

A. F. C.

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▶▶ Mr. Woodcock Sees America ◀◀

By JOHN S. GREGORY

AMOS W. W. WOODCOCK, America's current chief director of prohibition, has most of the attributes of Don Quixote. He is naïve, friendly, always apparently thinking the best of everything and everybody, with the possible exception of violators of that law which is his special charge and in which he believes most sincerely.

Now he has come completely into character with the famous fictional Spaniard. He has been out to see America and he thought very highly of it. Perhaps he closed his eyes here and there, purposely, but he has come back from his travels believing just as firmly in the law as ever, believing that he is a successful crusader, that all is well and if perchance it is not quite well in some places, then it will be well, for he will will it to be well.

His confidence is almost convincing. You stand before him. The honest face, which has just the hint of the ascetic, the well-modulated and insistent voice, impress you with the positiveness of the man. He is mild-mannered but forceful. Erect he stands, a wiry and vigorous but calm-spirited man. He has a friendly smile, but hardly a trace of humor. In stature he is smaller than most of his 2,500 dry agents. He can't be much over five and a half feet. Straight in the eye he looks you when he talks about prohibition for he is a teetotaler himself. He gives the appearance of the childlike faith. You can't smile it off. He somehow demands a respectful hearing. That is the man, officially.

Back from his travels, from his ventures in seeing America, and informally, there is something boyish and ingratiating about him. If one may change figures in the middle of things, there is something of Candide about him. The United States Government has spent thousands of dollars giving Mr. Woodcock a sight-seeing trip of America. Officially, they are what he calls "inspection trips." You realize, knowing the man, that his conscience is clear about spending all that money on "inspection trips," for he does inspect, even if he overlooks many things that must be there.

Yet he has such a splendid time of it, seeing America, that the cynic would be inclined to ask impertinent questions. If the Congressman who is so watchful of the purse strings of the Government —except when some pet local project that means votes is involved—if such a Congressman could listen to Mr. Woodcock tell of these trips, with glowing face and eagerly reminiscent eye—not prohibition facts but the facts of these United States as they strike the traveler —he might be inclined to criticize Mr. Woodcock's expenditure of so much of the taxpayers' money on these "junkets." That's what the Congressman would call them.

You hear Mr. Woodcock outline his itinerary before his "inspection trip," precisely and yet joyfully. Then you hear him after that particular trip. He transmits a vicarious pleasure to the listener. The current chief prohibition director has been to Europe and he served in 1916 as a soldier on the Mexican border, but until recently he apparently had not taken those long railroad stretches that carry one into the middle west and northwest.

"You don't realize how far it is between places out there," he said upon his return from one of his trips.

Smiling and with a hardly perceptible lick of his lips he told of the fresh meats of the West. One could picture him, after a long day inspecting and listening to his enforcers telling how well they were enforcing, sitting down to a beefsteak with onions and French fried potatoes and pie. They fed him well out there.

When he came back from Hawaii—for that also is America and enforceable —he told of the *lei* they hung about his neck, of the *Aloha* as the boat pulled away, of the colored streamers reaching back to the shore until they finally broke. Any liquor problem there? No, none in particular, he said. A few Japanese selling native liquor surreptitiously. But the farewell. Ah! That was impressive.

Mr. Woodcock has seen the whole country now, from tip to tip. It took him a year to do it. Not a whole year, no. He spent a good deal of time in Washington at first. After he had found his bearings in the Capital and learned what was required of him he set off on his travels. First he would take one enforcement district for his "inspection trip," then another. There are a dozen of these districts.

Now, at the end of the first year of his régime, he is completely "educated" on America, even including the island of Porto Rico. That will be covered shortly. He ventured forth into New England, one-time habitat of the Puritan, where people are still drinking. He ventured into New York and Pennsylvania and New Jersey, where people are still drinking. He saw the flat middle west, land of the political dry, where people are still drinking. He went into the southwest, land of bubbling oil, where people are still drinking. He adventured not so long ago into the northwest and along the Pacific Coast, where people are still drinking. Most recently he has been in the South, also politically dry, where people are still drinking.

On these "inspection trips" he talks with his agents, goes over their problems with them, and returns always convinced they are doing a better job than they were doing a year ago. Apparently he puts much faith in these agents of his. Doubtless he does not believe all he hears from them, but he believes a good deal of it. Mr. Woodcock never discusses with his agents the matter of sentiment about prohibition in the areas where they work, so he said recently. That is none of his business. It is none of their business, he holds. Their duty is to enforce the law. He will never be drawn into a discussion of sentiment, as a dozen or so Washington newspapermen who see him often will tell you.

There was a possibility not so long ago that Mr. Woodcock would get a federal judgeship over in Maryland, his home state. He could hold court in Baltimore and spend the week-ends over across the bay at his home in Salisbury, Maryland. At that time he had seen most of America at the expense of the government. A federal judgeship meant a nice quiet post for the rest of his life. All lawyers, and Mr. Woodcock is a good one, aspire to that. One could see that he had a yearning for this place, especially after he took great pains to announce that he was not seeking it, that he had asked his friends not to campaign for him. But he did not get the job. Attorney General Mitchell said he was needed in the job he was holding.

Mr. Woodcock has been more successful than the string of dry enforcement

(Continued on Page 381)

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New Styles in Medical Quacks

By DARWIN L. TEILHET

OLD DOC WAMAHOO has closed down his medicine show, sold his horses, dismissed his coochy dancer, taken the red paint off the three lone survivors of the Comach tribe with their marvelous Indian Herb Remedy for Man and Beast and has thrown away the labels of his Florida Snake Oil Medicine. Neither the bottles nor the contents were thrown away. The practitioners of this third oldest profession long ago learned that there was no need to throw away their stock to meet the exigencies of modern whims and fancies.

Since the time of Susarion, who, eight centuries before Jesus Christ, united a troupe of traveling players and acrobats in his famous chariot smeared with Greek and Persian signs proclaiming the surpassing curative powers of his dried pigeons' and cranes' blood, the quack doctor knows it is not the contents of his remedies which are important, but the manner in which they are offered. Many of the nostrums sold today are identical with the potions sold five hundred years ago by the *marchands d'orviétan* along the quays of Paris. Only the methods of dispensing these indispensable cure-alls has changed.

Old Doc Wamahoo was successful in his day. Assisted by his traveling show, gifted barkers, and a high percentage of alcohol in his Comach Indian Herb Remedy and Florida Snake Oil Medicine, Doc Wamahoo was able to retire to a pleasant estate in Virginia with close to half a million dollars salted away for safety in four banks. But his coochy dancer, long-haired Indians and urgent-voiced come-on men sweating under the flaring lights of gasoline torches before an awed and credulous audience are now as antiquated as the eighteenth century's Dr. Roley Poley Buster and his dignified iron pincer advertisements. ("The Magnetick Influence of the iron Pincer quite restores The Health to Man, Woman and Child.")

There are only a few quacks of the old school remaining. Lacking the initiative and intelligence to adapt themselves to the modern trend, these survivors of a more gaudy period make a living in the back streets of New York, in upper Pennsylvania, in the three southern states of West Virginia, North Carolina, and Alabama, and by broadcasting over a few poverty-stricken radio stations with local audiences. Because of the deliberate metamorphosis of the medicine show man into quite another type of creature the impression is current that he is no longer with us; that our modern sophistication and education have driven him out of existence.

Contrary to this impression, the medicine man is still with us, making more money than he had ever made before. Only no longer is he the red-nosed, brassy-mouthed gentleman of our youth. He has learned a brand-new technique in fleecing the unwary; he has discovered how to capitalize science. To the West belongs the doubtful honor of showing Old Doc Wamahoo's profession this new "scientific" approach to the credulous. More insidious and plausible than ever, the modern quack has come into being during the last ten years through the aberration of an innocent professor of pathology in the Cooper Medical College of San Francisco. In 1910 Professor Albert Abrams of this college first strayed from the straight and narrow road of rigid medical orthodoxy by publishing his book on "Spondylotherapy," wherein he claimed that the seat of disease could be determined by a system of tapping on the human body. This book had a surprising success. Dr. Abrams gave up his position to exploit his theory through courses in spondylotherapy at the rate of $50 a month. Students flocked to him by the hundreds.

His success was so great that he began to branch out. He next invented a weird electrical "dynamizer." By measuring the ohms of resistance indicated on the machine, any doctor was supposed to be immediately able to determine by a test of the victim's blood on the "dynamizer" whether he was suffering from sarcoma, syphilis, typhoid, malaria or various forms of sepsis. Abrams forgot medical ethics and started to advertise. As Dr. Fishbein observed: "He . . . . used all of the mystery and psychic awe that are inherent in electrical apparatus, particularly the radio, to advance his claims." While the medical profession repudiated Abrams's machines, a few magazines rushed to his support and literally hundreds of thousands of sufferers and imaginary invalids clamored and paid handsomely for his treatments. At one time there were over 700 practitioners of Abrams's methods. "Electonic practitioners," they called themselves. By 1922 Abrams was charging $200 a month for his courses, and $250 down payment and $5 a month royalty for his machines. He made a fortune in less than five years.

Eight centuries before the Christian era the quack doctor knew it was not the contents of his remedies which were important, but the manner in which they were offered

Before Abrams started on his meteoric career there were almost 800 old-fashioned "med-shows" on the road. Now there are fewer than a hundred following the one-night stands. Whether Abrams and his adherents were imposters or not makes little difference when one considers the tremendous effect the methods of the little professor of pathology had upon the innumerable counterparts of Old Doc Wamahoo. Albert Abrams, through inexperience or lack of desire, lost his fortune and died of a broken heart when he was finally and completely discredited, but his discovery of how to capitalize the psychic awe which the average man holds for science was not forgotten.

A very wise promoter, the late and lamented Gaylord Wilshire of Los Angeles, was astute enough to benefit by Abrams's demonstrations of the magic quality that "science" had for the average man. Wilshire was not a doctor. He knew nothing of medicine. He was a promoter, a speculator who had gambled and profited through laying out a new throughfare in Los Angeles, which is still honored by his name. But the last thing in the world that a good medicine show man needs to know anything about is medicine.

The Los Angeles street promoter dug up the old electrical belt and added several new innovations in appearance to sell to the trusting public. Wilshire's idea does not begin to compare with the complex $250 oscillodasts of Dr. Abrams. Wilshire made his fortune by

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going directly to the masses with a low-priced device costing under $50, while Abrams had to rely upon his own practitioners to whom he rented his more expensive machines.

The Los Angeles gentleman was astute enough to realize that he would need scientific backing in his advertisements and he discovered a poor dupe of a German doctor who was willing to supply material for his claims. Under Wilshire's wizardy the German doctor became one of the most important members of the European medical profession. Enough Wilshire Electrical Belts were sold during the first year to provide handsomely furnished "clinics" in every major city of the West and middle West. A tremendous advertising campaign was immediately started, written by a reputable advertising agency and accepted by any number of reputable newspapers who were claiming at the same time that they would not consider fraudulent patent-medicine advertising.

Other cunning medicine men, much better versed in their arts than Wilshire, left their medicine shows and Indian warriors and produced electrical belts of their own. Inasmuch as the manufacturing cost was about $3 a belt, they sold theirs for $25 and still made ample profit. Wilshire had to drop his price from $50 to $20 to meet competition. Then the other belts were retailed from $5 up and the bubble broke when Wilshire was unable to keep up his advertising.

Wilshire was investigated. The papers which had formerly accepted his advertising held him up as a fraud. Wilshire died, but hundreds of smart medicine show spielers did not forget the lessons that he and Abrams had taught. Nor did they forget the stupendous profits made possible through following these lessons. The oscillodast, the spondylotherapy system, the dynamizer and the electrical belt were out of date, but there were hundreds of other new "thought cures," electrical therapeutic machines, radium ray healing devices and gland medicines to be made convincing enough by advertising and publicity to sell to an ever credulous public avid for scientific curative miracles.

Coué followed Abrams and Wilshire and made over $300,000 with a piece of string. Then came the famous Dr. Goodie and his magnetic vibrator. After him the Hindu philosopher, Ghourmah, with the Missouri accent and the "Cathartic-ray" tubes for preventing colds. The country first began to be aware of the new type of medical quack when the eminent Dr. Akbistro and his olio-healing method was exposed.

San Francisco heard of this gentleman through a series of large newspaper advertisements and billboard signs announcing that "the Eminent Dr. Akbistro, fresh from his triumphs in Los Angeles, New York and Europe, would treat all ailments such as paralysis, epilepsy, stammering, nervousness, women's complaints, headaches, hallucinations, St. Vitus Dance, deafness, blindness and other functional troubles by his Successful and Painless New Method of Scientific Olio Healing."

A group of his admirers, signing themselves "The Society for Scientific Curative Thought," supplemented his advertising by buying additional newspaper space proclaiming: "The Great Dr. Akbistro, famous in all of the important centers of the world for his humanitarian work of healing the Sick and Crippled, would open his clinic every afternoon and treat Free of Charge all women who suffered pains and aches, physical and mental. Afternoon sessions will be for Ladies only! No one under 18 years of age admitted!"

Because of the decided lack of hospitality by San Francisco physicians, Dr. Akbistro was compelled to resort to a local theatre for his public demonstrations of scientific olio-healing. The theatre did not prove to be such a handicap for clinical manifestations of his healing art as might be supposed; few orthodox clinics are capable of seating over a thousand people; few orthodox clinics are equipped with a ticket office and a competent staff of ushers!

"You don't stutter! You don't stutter! You are cured!"

One week-night I visited Dr. Akbistro's clinic in the theatre. Over two-thirds of the audience were women. I was surprised that so many sick people could look so well and healthy and so comfortably nourished. A string orchestra played two or three soothing pieces. The lights turned dim, there was a hushed moment and the curtain slowly rolled up to reveal a bare stage set only with a white hospital table and two white chairs. Dr. Akbistro came before us and started his lecture in a low and melodious voice. Disclaiming the use of medicine entirely, branding surgery and drugs as fakes, he said that his healing powers emanated entirely through suggestion. He stopped and looked at us with piercing eyes.

"My friends, I shall prove to you the immeasurable powers of suggestion. I shall prove the powers of science before your very eyes!"

With these words he reached over to the table and picked up a yellow, chubby lemon. The lemon was displayed to the audience between his thumb and forefinger. Two or three women coughed nervously. Looking straight before him, in a deep and mellow voice, he directed the audience's attention to the "healing olio" which he held in his hand. It was no longer a mere lemon. It was a scientific adjunct to medical science. Scientific miracles are common to the average man and

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"It was no longer a mere lemon. It was a scientific adjunct to medical science"

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The Failure of Bank Guaranty Plans

By DAVID McCAHAN

Since 1907 eight states have initiated bank guaranty plans, and every one has failed. The last one passed out in 1930, with millions of depositors' guaranteed dollars left "in the red." Loose banking and unsound practices were unintentionally encouraged by these bank guaranty systems, with harm both to banks and depositors, as set forth in this article by Mr. McCahan, who is Assistant Professor of Finance and Commerce in the Wharton School of Finance and Commerce at the University of Pennsylvania.

FIFTY-SIX hundred bank failures within a decade. Nearly two billions of dollars in deposits tied up. What a record for the most prosperous period in American economic life! Indeed, the statistics tell a story which is hard to reconcile with our economic and financial progress since 1920. During the ten-year period ending June 30, 1930, 4,784 state and private banks and 779 national banks closed their doors. The stock market toboggan? To a slight extent perhaps. But other causes primarily—for only 82 national and 558 state and private failures were chargeable to the last year of that decade. In fact, these insolvencies were not concentrated in any one year but distributed rather evenly throughout the entire period.

When approximately one-fourth of our state and private banks and one-tenth of our national banks suspend activities under such circumstances, and the average rate of failure for all banks jumps to ten times that of the decade, our smug self-satisfaction with the old régime receives a shock and we ask "Why did this happen?" The agricultural depression, loans on inflated land values, frozen assets, inefficient management and dishonesty are frequently mentioned in explanation but if we scrutinize more closely the dismal picture of these thousands of failures, certain dominant facts stand out in clear relief.

The failed banks were relatively small in size. Ninety per cent were in towns of fewer than 10,000 population. For the most part they were in agricultural areas. If we attempt to square our explanations with these facts, they don't satisfy, for they ignore the basic cause—lack of diversification. An important principle had been ignored and even the professional "sunshine makers" who burst into print after the 1929 stock market collapse cannot laugh off the vicissitudes of depositors in these concerns by proclaiming that "fundamental conditions were sound."

Unit banking has advantages but its very nature renders diversification difficult though the benefits of this principle should be invoked in every field where risk exists. Insurance probably offers the best illustrations of how lack of diversification affects stability. A hail insurance company operating in a few counties may be successful so long as there are no hailstorms of consequence but when a disastrous storm sweeps through the territory, its doom is sealed. Only by averaging up over a wide territory is stability assured. Small banks likewise prosper when business is good in their communities but if the prosperity of such communities is dependent upon one crop (or even upon agriculture generally), and this should fail, the bank may suffer a like fate. Of course, surpluses may be built up for just such contingencies but the rising costs of bank administration have tended in late years to narrow the margin of profit.

But how effect diversification in the credit risks of a commercial bank which is decidedly a local institution and whose welfare is so inextricably linked with the prosperity or depression of agriculture or a leading industry? One school of bankers suggests combination—group, chain or branch banking—so as to "spread the risk" over a greater territory and a greater variety of business. Others have proclaimed that salvation lies in state guaranty of bank deposits. Whatever the merits of the former may be in theory, experience in this country has been too limited to warrant any conclusions as to whether the ultimate solution rests therein. Bank guaranty, however, has had a fair trial. Conditions under which it was initiated in this country were not unlike those prevailing since the stock market debacle in 1929.

If we turn back to 1907, we note evidences of widespread financial distress which crystallized the agitation for state guaranty funds so vigorously advocated for many years by the Populist party in the middle west, and, in spite of the unfortunate experience encountered by New York and Vermont with similar measures adopted during the pioneer days of American banking, resulted in the establishment of a guaranty fund in Oklahoma in 1907 and of similar funds in seven other states during the decade which followed.

Of the eight funds thus created, five—those of Mississippi, Nebraska, North Dakota, Oklahoma and South Dakota—were compulsory in character, all banking institutions chartered by the state being obliged to pay stipulated assessments into a common fund from which depositors of failed banks were to be indemnified. The other three—in Kansas, Texas and Washington—were optional. Regular annual assessments for member state banks varied from five cents to twenty-five cents per $100 of eligible deposits, but special assessments could also be levied in six of the states, thus bringing the maximum in one state, Texas, up to two dollars per $100 of deposits. Provisions requiring an initial deposit "as an evidence of good faith," levying an equalizing assessment upon new members, permitting the discontinuance of assessments when the fund reached a stated size, regulating withdrawals by members desiring to liquidate or nationalize and prescribing the procedure for paying the claims of depositors in failed institutions were common features of practically all laws.

Taken as a whole, these eight funds represented a colossal attempt to substitute group for individual responsibility in banking. No longer were the depositors in thousands of state banks obliged to select their institutions with regard to the capital structure or the competence and character of the officials. All member banks of each system insured the solvency of each and, in the eyes of the general public, though not of any law, the state government itself shored up the system and was the ultimate bulwark of safety.

But the foundations were laid on shifting sand. The benefits of insurance were offered but the fundamental features of sound underwriting were lacking. The burden was placed on the shoulders of the entire group, but not equitably. Primarily, however, group and individual interests were in conflict. Group interests demanded rigid restrictions upon such banking practices as would tend to increase the burden of failures. Individual interests were opposed to such because of possible effect on profits. The situation was not unlike that which exists as regards curtailment of crop production.

So long as business conditions were prosperous and prices on the upgrade, foundations appeared secure. Bank failures were relatively few and attributable largely to mismanagement or dis-

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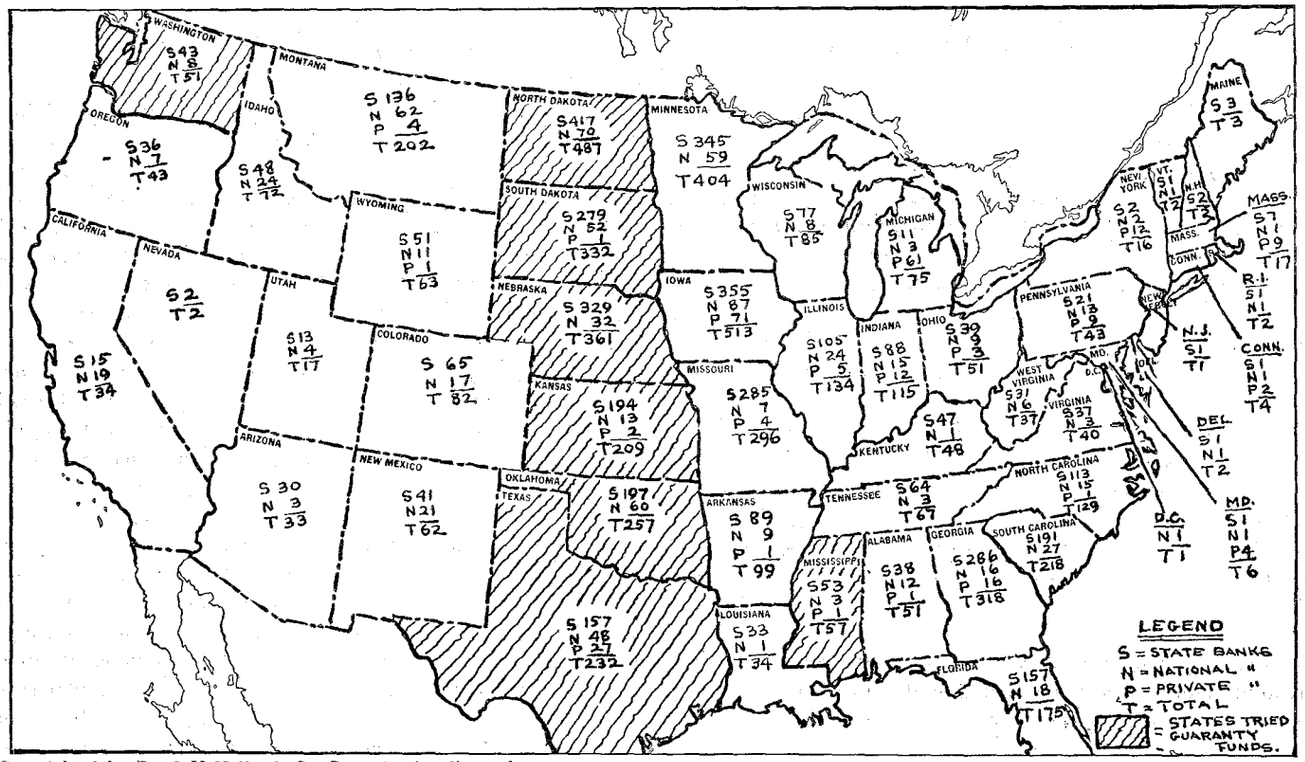

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THE BANK FAILURE MAP OF THE UNITED STATES, 1920 to 1930

According to figures compiled by Professor McCahan from the reports of the Comptroller of the Currency, 5,584 banks failed in the United States in ten years—4,538 state banks, 247 private banks, and 799 national banks. As will be seen by the map, a large proportion of these failures were in agricultural regions in the middle West, particularly in wheat or single-crop areas. As shown by the map, eight states tried the guaranty plan and gave it up. According to figures of the Federal Reserve Board, bank suspensions for the period 1921-1930 were 6,987, including 924 member national banks, 257 member state banks, and 5,806 non-members. In the same period 806 suspended banks were reopened, including 98 member national banks, 26 member state banks and 682 non-member banks

honesty rather than general economic distress. In fact, prior to 1920, the experience of most funds was fairly favorable and the cost of protection small. The outstanding exception was Oklahoma. Its law had been hurriedly enacted in 1907, when the state was admitted to the Union, and was applied without regard to underwriting principles or proper supervision of risks in a frontier state particularly susceptible, because of its oil discoveries, to a speculative spirit among its inhabitants, fluctuating property values, and a rapid growth of banks under lax regulation.

The real testing period for all came with the prolonged and widespread deflation in 1920. The storm washed out the foundations and caused the entire structure to collapse. Possibly the funds could hardly have been subjected to a more severe test. Many banks in all parts of the country went down in the ruins, those in the agricultural states being particular sufferers. Fundamental principles had been ignored.

It is not in the nature of politicians to admit readily the failure of a much vaunted experiment. Receiverships may be prolonged, certificates of indebtedness (to be paid from future receipts) issued to depositors having allowed claims, insolvent banks operated as going concerns, assessments increased, and the onus of the situation passed on to future administrations. Nor is it in the nature of depositors to accept the inevitable. "Hope springs eternal" and something may ultimately be realized from the liquidations of assets, the future assessments to be collected, or subsidization from the public treasury. Therefore, the decade following 1920 was marked by litigation and legislation and receiverships and resuscitations.

Of the funds in which membership was optional, that of Washington, created in 1917, was shortest lived. After the Scandinavian American Bank closed its doors in 1921, all other member banks withdrew. Depositors were not paid in full but the $600,000 contributed by solvent concerns was more than sufficient to consume their annual operating profits. The Kansas fund (1909) also became inoperative through withdrawals after the Supreme Court in 1926 had declared it insolvent and ordered initial deposits forfeited. In spite of the proceeds from these deposits, approximating a million dollars, the net deficit totalled about six millions.

It was more of a problem to let go the bear's tail in Texas as no procedure for leaving the fund appeared in the original law (1909), and even after the 1925 amendment a condition of retirement from the system was the posting of acceptable corporate or personal surety bonds, or the deposit of United States or municipal bonds, in amount equal to the withdrawing bank's capital. Nevertheless, during 1925, most banks elected the Bond Security plan, relatively few remaining in the system. The guaranty law was repealed in 1927. Because of the very large assessments which could be collected (the total exceeding $16,000,000 throughout the fund's existence), all losses were paid.

But for staging a financial wreck of first magnitude, a compulsory feature appears to have been essential. It was harder for member banks to leave their sinking ships as the only way out was through liquidation or nationalization. In three compulsory fund states, even this was contingent upon assuming a proportionate share of the fund's indebtedness.

Mississippi bankers paid in assessments nearly $3,000,000 from inception of the fund in 1914 to the close of 1929, but with guaranty certificates then outstanding (in excess of realizable assets) of more than that amount, they realized the hopelessness of continuing operations and petitioned the legislature to repeal the law so far as it provided for issuance of certificates to the depositors of banks subsequently failing. They agreed, however, to continue the payment of maximum assessments until all guaranty certificates should be retired. The Mississippi Bankers Associa-

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tion estimates that this will require from fifteen to twenty years and will involve an aggregate payment of at least sixty per cent of the present paid-in capital of all state banks. Legislation effecting this arrangement and modifying the banking laws in other material respects was enacted in 1930.

As late as 1926, with the Nebraska Guarantee Fund Commission operating a large number of banks as "going" concerns, the secretary of that body asserted in his annual report, "Truly, Nebraska is a remarkable state and tells a story no other state can tell." Even then traces of the handwriting on the wall were discernible in the figures which presumably supported such a contention. But the true seriousness of the financial situation was not publicly admitted for several years, and it was not until 1930 that, with the fund facing a net deficit of $20,000,000, remedial legislation was enacted. Since passage of the original law in 1909, members have been assessed nearly $20,000,000, with their future liability not yet definitely determined. As for depositors, 60,000 of them are still watchfully waiting and they derive little satisfaction from the new locks on the stable doors, as represented by more stringent banking laws.

The North Dakota fund (1917) had been operating but a few years when troubles began to multiply and, by the end of 1926, the net deficit was estimated at between fifteen and twenty million dollars. As the original 695 members had dwindled to less than half that number and as it would have required the maximum assessments of these for over 100 years to make good the shortage, entirely ignoring interest thereon, which shortage, incidentally, was more than double the capital stock, surplus and undivided profits of all the banks, the utter impossibility of saddling bankers with the loss was apparent. An attempt to pass it on to the public was defeated in 1928 when voters refused to approve a proposed $20,000,000 bond issue for the purpose. The guaranty law itself was repealed by the legislature in 1929, which action was overwhelmingly sustained in 1930 by voters' referendum.

The early difficulties of the Oklahoma fund have been described. Suffice it to say the fund became insolvent in 1921 and the law was repealed in 1923 but final adjudication of all claims has not yet been effected. The net deficit, nevertheless, is beyond $5,000,000, which voters and legislature have declined to assume.

When I studied the South Dakota fund several years ago, I found it in much the same position as the cat trying to get out of the well. Every time it collected the maximum assessment for a year it found itself three years further behind so far as paying off its deficit because the interest on estimated net indebtedness was four times gross receipts. The law creating it was repealed by the legislature in 1925 but that action was repudiated by the voters on referendum in 1926 whereupon the 1927 legislature abandoned the old plan of group responsibility by substituting in its stead a plan of individual guaranty which amounted to nothing more than requiring each bank to set up through annual contributions a special reserve with the state treasurer for the protection solely of its own depositors. Assets of the old fund now approximate one million dollars with liabilities in excess of fifty millions which will be reduced somewhat through salvage.

State guarantee of bank deposits has had its trial in the United States. Its record covers a period of two decades. During that time members of the various guaranty funds paid in more than forty-five millions of dollars and now confront a net deficit of at least twice that sum. Ultimate payment by the banks themselves is out of the question. Any plan to do so within a reasonable period would seriously handicap them in competition with national institutions if not entirely wreck the state banking system in several jurisdictions. In no case has the public shown any disposition to take over the burden in spite of the moral responsibility for lending the name of the state. With banks unable and states unwilling, the final incidence of the loss will doubtless remain unchanged. Depositors may well regard their losses, in part at least, as the price of a lesson in state insurance.

But would not many banks have failed in spite of the guaranty system? Unquestionably. The deflation period following upon the heels of the war boom proved disastrous to numerous institutions in all parts of the country, especially in the middle west. But the evidence indicates that existence of state guaranty materially increased the loss by fostering unsound and reckless practices. Yet for one to attribute failure to business conditions and dismiss the matter as beyond human control is to ignore the root causes and be guilty of specious reasoning. It would be just as logical to blame the failure of a fire insurance company on the occurrence of fire—a single conflagration if you please.

Basically, failure was due to a variety of causes, the foremost of which was poor underwriting selection and supervision of risks with no incentive on the part of banks to prevent loss. We boast a great deal of our individual initiative in this country, but its correlative—individual responsibility—was forgotten. To be successful, an insurance plan must leave with the individual a definite responsibility for averting loss even though the group assumes those losses which cannot be avoided. However, all banks were covered by the compulsory funds and membership in optional ones was easy of attainment. No effort was made to proportion the assessment rate to the hazard but strong and weak banks were treated alike. Recklessness was encouraged, as depositors felt no urge to deal with bankers of experience, character and conservative inclinations. The magic words "Depositors Protected by the Guarantee Fund of the State of ——" apparently sufficed as a substitute for all the usual banking qualifications. Regulation was lax.

In this connection, the Mississippi Superintendent of Banks stated in his 1928-29 report: "No plan is sound that relieves a bank from sole responsibility for its own acts; or makes one institution liable for debts that it did not incur; responsible for conduct over which it has no control," while the Oklahoma Bank Commissioner in even stronger terms asserts, "It is my judgment that any law which seeks to guarantee deposits in banks is fundamentally unsound as it places a premium on incompetence, if not actual crookedness, and opens up a field which presents temptations to the unscrupulous politician. In this State it resulted in the granting of charters promiscuously . . . . in many instances . . . . to inexperienced and incompetent parties." Of similar tenor are remarks made by the Texas Commissioner of Banking.

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This Week's Contributors

David McCahan is assistant professor of insurance in the Wharton School of Finance and Commerce at the University of Pennsylvania, and an authority on bank guaranty legislation.

Hugh M. Foster has been writing for many years about various phases of the food business. Until lately he was editor of the food department of the New York Journal of Commerce, and before that secretary of the New York Wholesale Grocers' Association, having charge of the rules and regulations of the Food Administration during the war.

Darwin L. Teilhet is a young writer in San Francisco whose name is well known amongst magazine readers.

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Chain Stores and Living Costs

By H. M. FOSTER

DO YOU know how much you save by buying at chain stores? Do you know whether you save anything? Do a few cut prices make you think that everything in the store is sold on the same basis? Does any one know the difference between the prices in chain and in individually owned stores for everything carried in stock and taking service into consideration? No one knows the answers to all these questions, but more is known now than was known a few years ago.

Take the grocery business, for example. Take it because there are more chain stores in that field than in any other, the competition keener, the processes of food distribution more complicated and one's concern more frequent and intimate. Take it, moreover, because something definite is known, based on four impartial investigations in the last three years. The trade controversy on the subject has gone on for years, but little attention need be paid to it, because it has been characterized by prejudice, violence and lack of facts. Two instances will serve.

Shortly after the War one of the largest chain store companies in the grocery business aroused the enmity of its competitors by displaying across its stores a streamer bearing the statement that Uncle Sam's figures showed that this company saved the American consumer three hundred or four hundred million dollars a year. The Commissioner of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, when the sign was called to his attention, said that there were no government figures to justify any such statement and so, in the course of time but after it had served its purpose, the sign came down. A few years later a well-known financial journal published a series of articles, with price charts, showing that this same company's prices had ranged, for thirty to thirty-five years, between twenty and twenty-five per cent below the food prices published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics; and that, therefore, once again it was proved that the company had saved its customers several hundred millions annually. An officer of the company asked a student of distribution his opinion of the record. The critic replied that he did not see how any competitor could remain in business against such a price differential, and added that in private conversation professors of business research in Harvard, Columbia and other universities had expressed the opinion that the difference between prices in chain grocery stores and in individually owned grocery stores, for all products carried and considering all services rendered by the individual, did not amount to more than between three and five per cent.

Professor R. S. Alexander, Assistant Professor of Marketing of the School of Business of Columbia University, later was engaged by the *Journal of Commerce* in New York to investigate such prices. His study covered 1,022 stores in ten neighborhoods of New York City, in which there were 721 individually owned and 301 chain grocery stores. Those numbers do not sound as if the chains had put the small merchants out of business yet. They mean more because they are taken from New York, which has had more chain stores for a longer time than any other city.

The most startling result of Professor Alexander's investigation is that by a simple arithmetic average of prices, those in individually owned stores are five per cent below those of chain stores, but by the average per cent of each article to the highest price of that article, which the Professor considered a more accurate computation, the chains have the advantage of less than three per cent. These figures are not to be interpreted for the city, state or nation. They do not include all products carried in grocery stores, but they do tell the truth of what was charged consumers for fifty grocery commodities of known and unvariable quality. In his conclusion, Professor Alexander attributes much of the chain store success to superior merchandising methods and he gives interesting reasons why New York is an unique market and cannot be compared satisfactorily with others.

This warning, however, did not deter Professor Malcolm D. Taylor, of the University of North Carolina, from making a similar study. Even there, Professor Taylor found sixty-nine individually owned stores to twenty-four chain stores. He tried, as far as possible, to keep to the list of the Bureau of Labor Statistics and by it, as far as he could use it, he found a saving in chain stores of 13.79 per cent. But omitting soaps from his list, the advantage of the chains was reduced to 12.07 per cent. His conclusion is that in Durham chains do offer an appreciable saving to consumers, but that progressive independent grocers can compete, and are competing, with the chains in that city.

Einar Bjorkland and Professor James L. Palmer, Professor of Marketing of the University of Chicago, have lately published another study. The following quotations from it are interesting:

> While this study reveals that on 75 items chain stores were underselling independent merchants as a class by at least 10 per cent, it is interesting to observe that some independent merchants were practically matching the price performance of the chains. Of the 309 dealers interviewed, 25 cash-and-carry merchants were found whose average on 74 items (one being omitted because of inadequate distribution) was bettered by the chains by only 3.82 cents on the dollar.
>
> Although it is impossible, because of the differences between chain stores and unit stores, and because of the influence of special prices, to determine the precise saving effected for the consumer by the chains, it probably approximates 10 per cent. A comparison between the chains and the average independent merchant is in a sense misleading, however, because it conceals the very significant fact that the more efficient of the latter are not being appreciably undersold by the chains. There is a group of cash-and-carry independents in Chicago the members of which on the strength of price performance are quite as entitled to patronage as are the chains. Similarly, indications are that many service independents are quoting prices higher than the average by an amount not exceeding service costs. In no sense has the ability of chain organization, to bring grocery products to the consumer at lower prices than the unit store can quote, been demonstrated.

The study of Professor Edgar Z. Palmer, Professor of Economics in the University of Kentucky, shows an advantage in chain stores of 14.3 per cent in Lexington. In the report, he says:

> In the first place the greater part of the difference between the chains and

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the independents was due not to the unstandardized, but to the rigidly standardized, goods. In the second place the general opinion of the students who viewed the fresh goods—though they were not expert judges—was that chain store quality was inferior to that of the finest independents, as good as the average, and superior to that of the lower class independents.

Finally, the actual conclusions of the New York study differ rather startlingly from ours. The chain store advantage in price there was only 3 per cent, but in Lexington it was over 14 per cent. Special conditions of intense competition at low standards of living among the smaller New York City merchants may account for the fact that they have almost been able to meet the chain store prices. Surveys of other large and small cities should be made to determine which result is more representative of the country as a whole.

As lately as June, 1931, the Bureau of Business Research of Harvard University published a report by Professor Malcolm P. McNair, associate professor of marketing, on the "Expenses and Profits in the Chain Grocery Business in 1929." The study covered 33,000 chain grocery stores operated by 82 companies with total sales in 1929 of slightly under $2,000,000,000. The typical gross margin was 19.4 per cent of sales and the cost of doing business was 18.2 per cent, leaving 1.2 cents out of each consumer's dollar as the pure net profit.

To determine what saving chain grocery stores offer consumers, Professor McNair compares the typical gross margin of the chain companies with the combined gross margins of wholesalers and retailers, but he qualifies his conclusion by saying that "there are many respects, however, in which such a comparison is not wholly satisfactory."

The common gross margin for retail grocers throughout the United States reported by Harvard in 1924 was 19.8 per cent, and the figure reported by the University of Nebraska in 1929 for the retail grocers in that state was 18.5 per cent. The common gross margin for wholesale grocers throughout the United States reported by Harvard in 1923 was 11.3 per cent, while that reported by Ohio State University in 1929 for the wholesale grocers of that state was 11.86 per cent. These differences have their effect on the conclusion reached by Professor McNair, which is:

"This means that the combined wholesale and retail gross margins amounted approximately to 28.2 per cent of the retailer's net sales, or 28.2 cents of the consumer's dollar. Against this figure may be set the common gross margin of 19.4 per cent, or 19.4 cents of the consumer's dollar, for chain grocery companies in 1929. The difference between these two figures, approximately 8.8 per cent, represents the difference in spread between the two channels of distribution, to the extent that the figures involved can be accepted as representative. So far as this comparison is valid, it means that the chain grocery companies in 1929, to cover their costs of doing business and their profits, took out of the consumer's dollar approximately 8.8 cents less than did wholesale and retail grocers together."

Professor Alexander's study was the first of its kind and was made at the height of the prosperity era of 1929. Those of all the other professors have been made since the beginning of the business depression. Some allowance, and nobody knows how much, should be made for the probability that large chain store corporations can reduce their prices faster than single merchants can. If these studies serve no other purpose than to bring out facts, they are well worth while, especially as the Federal Trade Commission, in its investigation of chain stores, is making the same kind of study. When the complete report is published, we shall have something far more comprehensive and reliable than we have now, for it is said that the commission intends to cover all products carried in all grocery stores, instead of only selected products.

In adopting Senator Brookhart's resolution, the Senate has directed the Federal Trade Commission to ascertain and report "what legislation, if any, should be enacted for the purpose of regulating and controlling chain store distribution; conspiracies in restraint of trade; the advantages or disadvantages of chain monopoly; unfair methods of competition; conspiracies in result of trade; the advantages or disadvantages of chain store distribution; quantity prices and whether they are a violation of the anti-trust laws; and what legislation, if any, should be enacted with reference to such quantity prices."

On May 12, 1930, Garland S. Ferguson, Jr., chairman of the Federal Trade Commission, wrote to the President of the Senate about "such troublesome questions as the comparative grade and quality of merchandise sold in chain and independent stores." He added, "For this reason a given number of people or a given amount of money should afford a far better picture of the comparative situation in stores handling these types of commodities than in those where comparison of merchandise would involve analysis to determine the comparability of chain and independent merchandise from the point of view of grade and quality. It was determined, therefore, that the study of the chain and independent prices would be confined for the time being to the fields of groceries, drugs, and tobaccos."

The list to be priced will include over 1,200 items and already price comparisons have been completed in Detroit, Washington, Cincinnati, Des Moines and Memphis.

Recently the commission has said that if sufficient funds were available, a report can be made by December 1, 1931, on "leaders" and price cutting, service and non-service features, advertising expenditures and methods, birth rate, growth and mortality of chains, consolidations and mergers, wages per employee, volume of sales per store, gross and net profits, and rates of return on investment. The complete and final report is expected by June 30, 1932. When it is issued we shall know far more than we do now about chain stores and we shall have a far broader basis on which to compare prices.

In attempting to determine the economy in buying from a chain store, or from an individual merchant, it must be remembered that price concessions by manufacturers have a good deal to do with consumers' prices and that there is nothing of the kind on the independent's side. Large buyers can and do obtain reductions in prices so that they can sell an article to the public at a price that seems as if it were below cost, or at least cut, whereas the chain store company may have bought it at so low a figure that it can sell at that price and still make a profit. A conversation I had a few years ago with the president of a chain store corporation will illustrate the point. He asked me, "What do you call a rebate? If we advertise a manufacturer's product in our advertisements, are we not properly entitled to an al-

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lowance for such advertising?"

"Yes," I admitted.

"If we put the manufacturer's product in 15,000 windows, or anywhere else on display in 15,000 stores, are we not entitled to be paid for sales effort?"

"Yes," I admitted.

"If we instruct our managers to push a manufacturer's product, are we not entitled to be paid for that sales effort?"

"Yes," I admitted, "but you are not entitled to any further special allowance or price concession, merely because you are you."

"What do you mean?" he asked.

"I mean this," I answered. "The president of the second largest company in the country, manufacturing a staple article that is sold in every grocery store in the United States, received a while ago a telegram to meet a group of chain store men in a certain hotel in Boston. When he entered the room, the chairman of the meeting said to him, 'We are ready to make a contract for a year or more for the goods you manufacture. If you are willing to sell to us at a price five per cent less than the lowest price you make your largest customer, and to make an affidavit to that effect, and to prove, by your records, to our satisfaction, the truth of your statement, we are ready to sign a contract with you. Are you ready to sign?'

" 'Just a moment,' replied the manufacturer. 'I'd like to understand this thing a little more clearly, Mr. Chairman. Are you speaking for yourself only, or for all the gentlemen in this room?'

" 'I thought you understood to begin with,' answered the chairman, 'that this was a meeting of all the chain store companies represented here today. I am talking not only for my own company, but for all the companies whose officers sit around this table. Now, are you ready to accept our proposition? Or, if not, we can get others who are.'

" 'I don't like to answer that question, right here and now,' replied the manufacturer, 'I should like to consult my associates. Can't you give me a few days to think over the matter?'

" 'Not a day,' replied the chairman. 'Sign here and now, or not at all.'

" 'Very well,' answered the manufacturer. 'Will you please put the proposition in writing so that I may understand it clearly?'

" 'No,' retorted the chairman. 'I will put nothing in writing. I have stated it all clearly enough.'

" 'No,' shouted the manufacturer. 'You know you won't put it in writing, because if you did, it wouldn't take me five minutes to get downstairs to the telegraph office in this hotel and send a wire to the Federal Trade Commission.'

"The following morning the manufacturer received a telephone message from an unidentified drug store that his competitor had been awarded the contract."

When I had finished the story, I turned to the president of the chain store company and said, as simply and innocently as I could, "That is what I call a rebate."

Let us admit that chain stores get the advantage in low prices. Nevertheless, rebates do not affect facts. Durham is not New York, any more than Lexington is Chicago. No expert accountant can make an average of these four investigations that will mean anything. But as such investigations are continued, especially by the Federal Trade Commission, we shall know more generally whether the monetary saving is worth the trouble. Generally speaking, men who have studied the subject for years say that chain stores sell at lower prices than do independent merchants, but then, is it safe to speak generally?

Through a Glass Darkly

From the Trend of the Week in the Outlook of July 18, 1951

The executors of the late Billings MacGheen revealed Monday that the millionaire sportswriter for ten years secretly defrayed the cost of the annual Harvard-Yale-Princeton transatlantic airplane race.

An editorial in the July, 1951, issue of *Advertising* asserted that the famous magazine publisher, the Duke of Bilgewater—who on his arrival in New York deplored the use in advertisements of paid testimonials—receives an annual fee from Flubbs, Ltd., for permission to use his ducal crest as a trademark with the inscription "By Special Appointment, Hatter to his Grace the Duke of Bilgewater."

Dr. V. Z. Burlitz was appointed last week dean of the Faculty of Foreign Languages of the National Aviation University, which for some years has made compulsory the study of Esperanto and five foreign languages.

The Failure of Bank Guaranty Plans

(Continued from Page 368)

It is of interest that Governor Weaver of Nebraska, in his message to the 1930 special legislative session, imputed a moral obligation to the state "upon the following undisputed facts"—the system was foisted upon the banks; the banking department could not protect the system by refusing to issue bank charters in communities where new facilities were not needed; nor had the department any power to license bankers or revoke their right to do business; there was no statutory definition of insolvency which resulted in the continued operation of banks which should have been closed, thereby materially increasing the deficit and bringing about preferential treatment of certain fortunate depositors.

Moreover, banks were specifically authorized to advertise that depositors were protected by a fund to which the name of the state was attached and which misled many into a belief that the state stood responsible for the fund's success. Nor were the bankers themselves held blameless by the Governor for, although accepting the system with reluctance, they, individually and through their organizations, "later heralded the system as a panacea for all, advertised it extensively and contributed in misleading the people as to its limitations and scope."

Closely linked with this situation was failure to realize the maximum salvage obtainable. If an insolvent bank is taken over promptly and its affairs administered by competent men, the loss to depositors may be greatly minimized. Otherwise, the yield from assets may be small and expenses large. There is considerable evidence of delays, inefficiency and political influence in this respect. From an underwriting standpoint, three glaring violations of sound practice stand out. The risk was too greatly concentrated, as the funds were located, for the most part, in states primarily agricultural so that any influences affecting crop prices were necessarily transmitted to them. Assessment rates were too low and lacked a scientific basis. Reserves were inadequate and the maximum limits placed upon their size much too low. The actuarial foundations for these interrelated factors contemplated only "fair weather." They weren't designed to withstand a severe depression.

The depression year 1930 witnessed the close of the era of state guarantee of bank deposits which was so widely heralded as a preventive of panics, as a stabilizer of banking and as the financial safeguard for all the people, in another outstanding depression year, 1907. And, as the curtain lowers on bank guaranty, few persons having state banking interests at heart will be sorry to see it down, for, as the superintendent on a building construction job once remarked about the plastering in a recently completed building, "it covers a multitude of sins."

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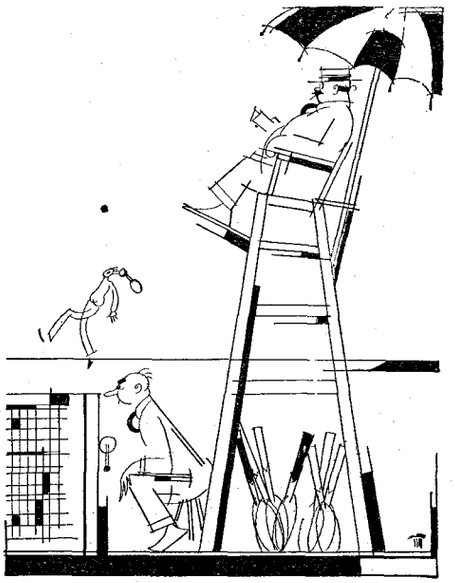
The Spotlight on Sports



A New Champion

TWO National Open Golf Championships were played at Inverness this year in place of the conventional one. Both were dominated by the same two golfers—Billy Burke and George Von Elm. Like the gladiators of Homer's era, these two combatants fought a hand-to-hand duel while their fellow contestants, figuratively speaking, stood by with open mouths.

It was a peculiar National Open in that public attention became focused on Burke and Von Elm as early as the second day and never thereafter deviated. Nobody else had a real chance to win. Walter Hagen, Mac Smith and Leo Diegel threatened the pace setters at the start of the fourth lap, but the first two wilted under pressure and Diegel's brilliant finish availed him nothing since the trail blazers did not falter. The rest of the great field was never in the running. Unlike the dog fight of 1920 at Inverness, when five players came to the home hole with a chance to tie, this 1931 championship became a two-horse race after the quarter pole had been passed.

While Von Elm had a small clique of personal friends and a certain part of the gallery pulling for him, the professionals were almost unanimously for Burke. Billy is one of them, a member in good standing of the P. G. A.

Von Elm occupies an anomalous position. He is a golfing counterpart of Edward Everett Hale's man-without-a-country. Though he renounced his amateur status last fall, George has rejected overtures to join the P. G. A. He doesn't want to be called a professional, yet he accepts money prizes. He is a free lance, a lone wolf, an outsider.

U. S. G. A. officials naturally resent his sarcastic references to their interpretation of amateurism, his thinly veiled insurgency. The professionals, by the same token, take exception to what they consider his holier-than-thou attitude, his snobbish exclusiveness. "Von Elm is a professional in fact but he won't admit it," they say. Under the circumstances Burke's victory was a popular one. Everybody but Von Elm and his intimates was satisfied.

The Early Bird

STARTING times often play a vital part in deciding golf championships. Burke, trailing by two strokes, began his last lap of the tournament proper one hour earlier than Von Elm. He was the pursuer in terms of strokes but the pursued in point of time.

Von Elm's was the severer nerve ordeal. At every tee, on his last swing around the course, he learned from camp followers what Burke had scored. George was thus compelled to play against a row of inexorable figures. He knew what he had to get at each hole to keep his lead. That way madness lies.

Burke, on the contrary, was blissfully ignorant of what Von Elm was doing or might do out there on the links behind him. Billy's cue was to play as well as he could and hope that it would suffice. Unlike Von Elm, he didn't have to face a sequence of immutable numerals. Burke's ordeal came in the locker room while waiting for Von Elm to finish.

144 Hole Play-Off

THAT protracted play-off, studded with sudden turns of the tide and pulse-quickening strokes, left the imagination surfeited. The human mind can absorb only so many sensations. That limit was passed at Inverness.

Boiled down to its essentials, the play-off was decided by superiority within 100 yards of the pin. Outdriven consistently, outplayed by a fair margin on long range approaches, Burke nevertheless triumphed because of his genius at clipping and putting. Theoretically, Von Elm should have won. Besides making Burke play the odd, George hit more greens with his approach shots. How then did Burke win? By making one stroke do the work of two when near the green, by retrieving his occasional errors via astounding recoveries from thick rough and sand traps, by taking only one putt on more greens than seemed humanly possible. Strategically speaking, Von Elm was the aggressor. He usually had the inside track to the pin, only to see Burke steal a half or win by means of a deadly chip or a gobbling putt.

Still there is glory enough for both. Statistics speak louder than adjectives. When one thin stroke separates two contenders after 144 holes of championship golf it seems churlish to draw comparisons.

All-American Tennis

ANOTHER American clean-up at Wimbledon! To the names of William Tilden and Bill Johnston must be added that of Sidney Wood as All-England singles champion. Unfortunately, Wood's title is clouded by the default of Frank Shields, his team mate and prospective fellow finalist. Lanky Shields beat Borotra—the man who was picked to beat the field—and critical opinion conceded Frank the edge over Wood. Certainly Shields' explosive net game is more stimulating to watch than Wood's geometric angles from deep court.

Disappointing as the denouement was to center-court enthusiasts, there can be no question that Captain Hardy acted wisely in saving Shields for the Davis Cup matches. That trophy is our main objective—Wimbledon, for all its tradition and charm, was merely secondary.

The high spot of the All-England meeting was Shields' tumble when leading Borotra two sets to one and four games to three. Until then, the audience hadn't attempted to conceal its partiality for the blue-béreted Basque. When a Frenchman faces an American in London blood ceases to be thicker than water. The sea is wider than the Channel when it comes to handshaking. Shields' injury, however, brought a shift in sentiment. Your Englishman likes to pull for the underdog. Frank's stoicism in continuing the match appealed to British instincts. England applauds a "sticker."

Borotra, gallant as always, vaulted over the net and massaged his rival's leg solicitously. The Basque can do such things without any suggestion of grandstand playing. There was no hint of self-consciousness or affectation in his Good Samaritan act.

Stribling at Cleveland

WHEN sports writers deal cynically with a prize fight in advance, refusing to fall for the ballyhoo, you needn't be surprised if it turns out to be a rousing scrap. The Stribling-Schmeling match,

(Continued on Page 380)

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The Week in Business

Looking Ahead

THE inclination of business to keep its eyes hopefully on the future rather than regretfully on the past has been clearly revealed during the past week, particularly in wholesale and retail distribution. In several markets retail trade has made further advances, and both wholesalers and manufacturers have been encouraged by the changed attitude of the retailers, who have apparently decided that at last it is time to restock.

Production still lags. Steel manufacture has declined to 32 per cent of capacity, and no upturn is discernible in automobile production, building construction or the extractive industries. Petroleum is on the spot, with crude selling at 2½ cents a barrel and thousands of wells facing a shutdown.

In spite of these unfavorable factors, business as a whole reveals a more cheerful condition of mind than it has shown for many months. Even the steel producers, operating at one-third of capacity, do not appear to be downhearted. On the contrary, many of them confidently believe that the autumn increase in demand will come earlier than usual this year.

And don't overlook the textiles. Here is an industry which has been languishing for several years. Many mills, in both north and south, are calling back operatives who were laid off, and several important plants are working on full-time schedules. If the textiles can come back, the other industries should show signs of life very soon.

Doherty-Woodring Bout

THAT RUSH OF WIND you hear from out Kansas way is no ordinary cyclone. It is a championship fight between Governor Harry Woodring and Henry L. Doherty, the big oil and gas man of the Cities Service Company.

The Governor says that his only aim is to secure lower gas rates for Kansas consumers; that he proposed to get them by negotiation rather than litigation; and that it was Mr. Doherty who chose to go to law in the matter.

What Mr. Doherty says would take several pages even to summarize. One charge is that Governor Woodring so framed his request for lower gas rates that Cities Service could not possibly reply in the affirmative. Another is that the Governor is "a tool" of the Kansas City *Star*, and Mr. Doherty filed on July 10 a $12,000,000 libel suit against the publishers of the *Star*, alleging that they had "injured his business, impaired the value of his security holdings, deprived him of public confidence, and caused him pecuniary loss."

The case has many sensational angles, including the stopping by the State Securities Commission of sales in Kansas of the Cities Service Company's curb stock and an appeal by Mr. Doherty to Postmaster-General Brown to shut off the circulation through the mails of the Kansas City newspapers which attacked him.

More important than Governor Woodring's or Mr. Doherty's personal interests is the question of how this fight is going to affect the thousands of investors in Cities Service securities. Their stake in the proceeding is something that should be carefully watched as the battle progresses.

INDICES

(A two-minute summary)

Commodity Prices (Fisher's Index—1926=100) July 9—70.4. (Crump's British Index—1926=100) July 9—64.4.

Car Loadings (American Railway Assn.) Week ended June 27—759,290 cars (increase of 20,174 over preceding week; reduction of 177,400 under same week of 1930).

Steel Ingot Production Five-day period ended July 3—32% of capacity (reduction of 1.5% under preceding week and of 16% under same week of 1930).

Crude Oil Production Five-day period ended July 3—daily average gross 2,482,500 barrels (increase of 40,550 over preceding week; reduction of 99,000 under same week of 1930).

Grain Exports Five-day period ended July 3—2,236,000 bushels (increase of 373,000 over preceding week and of 573,000 over same week of 1930).

Bank Clearings (as reported to Bradstreet's) Week ended July 9—$7,161,799,000 (reduction of 27.8% under preceding week and of 16.4% under same week of 1930).

Failures (as reported to R. G. Dun & Co.) Week ended July 9—389 (reduction of 24 under preceding week and of 39 under same week of 1930).

Consolidating Chains

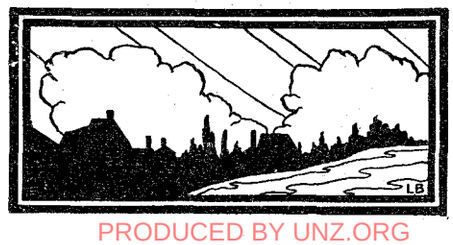
FOLLOWING THE LEAD of the metropolitan banks, the chain stores have set up a competition for the position at the top of the list as regards capitalization and annual sales.

It will probably be a long time before any other chain combination can pull A. and P. down from its No. 1 position, but the recent absorption of MacMarr Stores, Inc., by the Safeway organization is at least a threat in that direction.

During the first half of 1931 the total net sales of Great Atlantic & Pacific Tea were $531,619,232. Sears-Roebuck came second with $158,968,370, but since a large proportion of the sales were made through its mail order department this organization does not properly rate as a strictly chain store enterprise. Second place really belongs to Safeway-MacMarr, with $143,830,573 in sales for the first half of the year.

According to the latest reports, Safeway had 2,650 and MacMarr 1,392 retail outlets, making a total of more than 4,000. MacMarr has operated chiefly in the western states, where Safeway is already well established. There will be some elimination of competing units but no wholesale closing of stores. The total number of outlets is likely to remain close to 4,000.

Further merger movements are likely to develop in the near future. Chains worth watching are First National Stores in New England, National Tea in the middle west and the Daniel Reeves organization in the New York metropolitan area.



English Study of Taxation

SIGNIFICANT comparisons between British and American viewpoints on taxation are made in *Taxation—Its Incidence and Effects* (Macmillan, $3), by H. A. Silverman, head of the department of adult education at University College, Leicester, and author of *The Economics of Social Problems*.

As everybody knows, taxation is a problem in Great Britain if it is anywhere in the world. In the course of about ten years, the national and local budgets have increased in proportion from one-eighth to one-quarter of the people's total income. Mr. Silverman discovers one favorable by-product of this trend: it has had "the salutary effect of stimulating an almost unprecedented interest in the economics of public revenue and expenditure."

The author divides his material into an introductory section, six chapters on general principles of taxation, eleven on the chief forms of taxation, and an appendix which includes some valuable statistical tables. There is also a well-selected bibliography and an adequate index.

Mr. Silverman's treatment of his subject is serious, as befits the theme, but never dry or pedantic. Mechanically the material is so broken up with sub-heads that any specific topic in which the reader is particularly interested may be easily and quickly located. Altogether, the book is a welcome contribution to the literature of taxation as a world problem.

FRANK A. FALL.

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The New Movies

"The Mystery of Life"

CLARENCE DARROW may not be the most beautiful movie actor we have uncovered, and his voice may have a certain monotonous twang, but the film *The Mystery of Life*—an animated lesson in biological evolution—gives him a fine chance to express himself. First Mr. Darrow tells briefly of the Scopes trial in Tennessee and points out that even today there are communities in the U. S. A. in which ordinary textbook evolution is black magic, and illegal.

The Mystery of Life tells nothing new, of course—most of us covered it in high school and college—but the arrangement and choice of the pictures of plants and animals, combined with Mr. Darrow's running fire of caustic comment, make it all decidedly worth seeing. UFA's scientific films, newsreels, the old film *The Lost World* and many other pictures have contributed to *The Mystery of Life*. With Mr. Darrow in his lecture is Dr. H. M. Parshley, professor of zoology at Smith College. The film ends with the suggestion that, since the human race has done so well by itself in the past in coming up from the oyster beds, it has a great future in store for it. "Going up, and up," sadly observes Mr. Darrow, "but why are we going up, where are we going to and why should we go there?" Nobody seems to be able to answer this question, so the film ends.

Paramount

In "Newly Rich" Jackie Searle performs as an obnoxious child movie star who dresses this way "because his public likes it"

"The Black Camel"

Charlie Chan, the Chinese detective invented by Earl Derr Biggers, is on the job again, down in Hawaii. The part is of course played by Warner Oland, that sinister cinema Oriental who has already solved so many murder mysteries. *The Black Camel* is entertaining and perhaps rates a bit higher than some of the other Charlie Chan films. If Mr. Biggers is interested, I do not think that Charlie Chan's odds and ends of "Chinese" philosophy are either funny or clever.

Worth Seeing

Hell Below Zero: Unusual African travelogue by Carveth Wells.
Maltese Falcon: Mystery story with Bebe Daniels.
Newly Rich: Two child movie stars go to London and run away with the child king of a Balkan state. The children will enjoy this in spite of its title.
Le Million: Charming and extremely entertaining farce from France. No French needed.
Rebound: Ina Claire gives a fine performance in Donald Ogden Stewart's adult but not always successful play. Some of the lines are good.
Skippy: If you haven't already seen this twice you ought to.
Smart Money: Edward G. Robinson gives an interesting characterization as a professional gambler.
Smiling Lieutenant: One of those Maurice Chevalier operettas—and better than average. Also Claudette Colbert and Miriam Hopkins.
Viking: Seal-hunting off Newfoundland. Most of the scenery is ice, which should be a help this weather.

"The Merry Wives of Vienna"

The same director, composer and scenario writer who made the phenomenally successful *Two Hearts in Waltz Time* have turned out another German film operetta. It is delightful nonsense, and the music is melodious and pleasant. The scene is Vienna, in 1875, and the characters are a nice old gentleman and his *ten* pretty daughters (and they're *all* pretty, too). It's a pity more of us don't know German, because *The Merry Wives of Vienna* is really charming.

"The Girl Habit"

A good, old-time, door-banging farce is something of a relief after all the suffering women we have been subjected to recently—and Charlie Ruggles is just the boy to do it. He is assisted by Edward Cline, his director, who, by the way, was working for Mack Sennett back in 1912, and later made many of the Ben Turpin slapstick films. Mr. Cline's whirlwind, knockdown pace and Mr. Ruggles' polite reticence produce extremely satisfactory results. *The Girl Habit* is actually a motion picture that moves. It will probably keep you laughing for an hour and a half—and the next morning you won't be able to remember a thing about it—which shows how important it is.

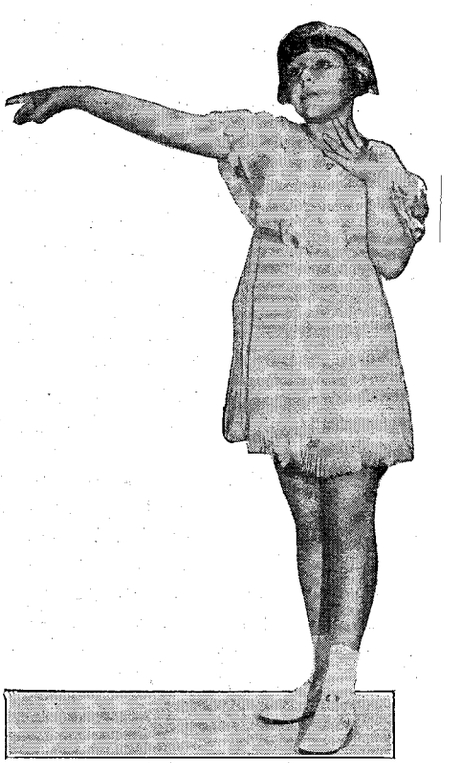
News Notes

A certain police department censor in one of the largest cities in New England got his job because his feet hurt him. *Variety* reports as follows:

He was just a sergeant tramping a beat and watching the rookies when his dogs began to bring him misery. Then some one thought of a theatrical censor job. The sore-footed sergeant got it. Among his most notable achievements is forcing chorus girls to wear "loose tights" and barring the stage version of *Strange Interlude*. He's noted for lacking any sense of humor, but really isn't so bad when it comes to looking over films.

Gangster pictures may be forbidden inside the theatres, but the Aledo Opera House of Quincy, Illinois, is installing a bullet-proof box office, realizing that life is often stranger than fiction. The walls are of sheet steel and the glass in front is an inch thick. Protecting the cash as well as the kiddies' morals.

Most of us will be glad to hear that the plans of the American Picture Co. to produce a dry propaganda movie have fallen through. It appears that the drys couldn't agree on how to administer the propaganda. J. C. Penney, the millionaire chain store magnate, was behind the thing.



Mitzi Green, who plays the part of Delicia Tate, another gold-plated Hollywood tot with temper, temperament and everything

CREIGHTON PEET.

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The Latest Plays

THIS is a fine time to be bringing this up, it is, but I hope it is news to a few people that there is a perfectly delightful and competent series of Gilbert and Sullivan revivals in progress at the Erlanger Theatre, under the direction of the veteran operetta impresario, Milton Aborn. His organization is called, somewhat grandiosely, the Civic Light Opera Company, but never mind about that. They began back in May with *The Mikado* for a two weeks' engagement, presumably because, A: a lot of people had nothing much to do and would work for reasonable salaries and, B: because all of them really liked the Savoyard operas and had faith in their immortality. All the wise guys said it couldn't be done. Mr. Aborn was just wasting what little money he was spending on his economical productions. The Shuberts and others, including the redoubtable Winthrop Ames, had tried it again and again. Everybody always talked about how much they would like to see Gilbert and Sullivan revivals, and when one was presented the ones who had asked for them most vociferously stayed away with the rest—even as you and I. All right, what happened? Well, they have built up what is by now a capacity business, and Mr. Aborn plans to stay right there in the Erlanger not only through the summer, but extend the season into the fall and winter—that is, the period covering what is regarded as the "regular theatrical season." (Quotes Mr. Aborn's, from his special announcement.)

By the time this piece is in print *Iolanthe* will have been running a week, and before I can tell you exactly what the performance is like it will have closed, unless it is held over, as they are still sticking to their two-weeks-per-show plan. However, the company is a semi-permanent one—that is, the chorus and most of the principals appear in all of them, only one or two changes being made each time on account of special types being needed—so all you really want to know is whether the troupe know their business. The answer is emphatically that they do, and not only that, they give the impression that they are enjoying themselves as much as any of us out front. You know what *that* does for a show of that type!

In *The Pirates of Penzance* or *The Slave of Duty*, which is the first of the series that I laggardly got around to seeing, the sergeant of police is played by William Danforth, who knows how to get all the laughs there are out of *A Policeman's Lot Is Not a Happy One*, and delightful Frank Moulan continues to be just that as the major general. The latter will be in *Iolanthe*, as will Howard Marsh, late Ravenal in *Show Boat*, who is a handsome enough tenor for anybody. Vera Ross, who will be remembered as the Queen of the Fairies in Winthrop Ames' beautiful production, will again sing that *rôle*. And Vivian Hart, who was a charmingly piquant Mabel in the *Pirates*, will be in *Iolanthe* as well.

I'm sorry, but I almost forgot a moral about all this that needs a bit of pointing: the scenery and costumes for Mr. Aborn's revivals are far from elaborate, being fairly obviously from storage; there isn't a revolving stage to be seen—not one! But you can hear practically all of W. S. Gilbert's priceless lyrics and, through doing away with the unnecessary gorgeousness, it has been made possible to stage the operettas at a two dollar top price. The moral is that Milton Aborn has demonstrated that there is a large American public still who appreciate wit and melody if they can get them at a reasonable price.

This all makes me pick up hope that he or somebody else may still have the temerity to import A. P. Herbert's *Tantivy Towers*, of which I wrote you from London some time back. If Thomas F. Dunhill is not quite a Sir Arthur Sullivan, I strongly contend that he has done a better job with Mr. Herbert's lyrics than any other living English or American composer has given any concrete indication of being able to do. I'm as sure as Mr. Aborn was about the public for Gilbert and Sullivan that there also are a lot of audiences that would like to hear the Earl of Tantivy sing,

It's really remarkably pleasant
To wander about in the wood,
And kill an occasional pheasant,
Provided the motive is good.

OTIS CHATFIELD-TAYLOR.

Recommended Current Shows

Crazy Quilt: Rowdy and fairly entertaining revue.
Gilbert and Sullivan Revivals: See current article on this page.
Grand Hotel: Still revolving merrily and dramatically.
Once in a Lifetime: Seems set for the summer. And why not? It's funny.
Precedent: Grim and earnest presentation of the facts in the Mooney case.
Private Lives: Noel Coward's comedy hit goes on without him.
The Band Wagon: Perfect staging of a tasteful, starful revue.
The Barretts of Wimpole Street: Not even the weather can keep Katharine Cornell's admirers out of a somewhat pathological play.
The Green Pastures: It's getting tough to think of anything new to say about this one. You know it's good, don't you?
Third Little Show: Bee Lillie and Ernest Truex in an entertaining revue.

Ivory, Apes & Peacocks

ADVERTISING French, like radio English, is a language with a grammar and vocabulary all its own. Hitherto its use has been largely confined to coturiers and parfumeurs and other manufacturers of more fashionable and luxurious wares. Nothing makes merchandise seem more smart and expensive than a *je ne sais quoi* and a couple of *soupcons*. The advertising writer knows that he has only to sprinkle a few *accents aigus* through his copy and the boss will shout *Mon Dieu!* and kiss him on both cheeks. And now comes Sears Roebuck et Cie., announcing in a recent ad: *"Je n'avais aucune idée Sears construisait des si belles maisons!"* "Which," continues the ad, "is the French way of saying I had no idea Sears built such fine homes." Well now, *mon cher M. Sears (ou M. Roebuck), vos idées n'ont pas de bretelles,* which is the French way of saying your ideas are not supported by the facts. You may build swell houses, and no doubt you do, *des maisons exquises, des maisons charmantes,* but when it comes to building French phrases, you put the cellar in the attic. Which is the American way of saying, as a linguist you're a good architect. Pardon, *M. Sears (ou M. Roebuck),* our brutal frankness. But leave, *nous vous prions,* French to the Frenchmen. And remember, when you check up on this with some Frenchman of your acquaintance, that the French are a very polite people. He will assure you that you speak French like a native. He will be too polite to add: "of Chicago."

TEAKWOOD makes good garden furniture. It doesn't need to be stained or painted; exposure to frost, snow, sun and rain does it no harm. Brown in color, it turns with exposure to a pleasant natural grey. We have seen some excellent teak garden furniture, simple and sturdy—rather more expensive than other material, it is true. The company that makes this also makes teak sinks, drainboards and panelling for the house, plant tubs and rose bowers for the garden, and decks, deck houses and rails for yachts.

WASHING cars in your own garage is made easy by a new overhead washer, which has a 6-foot hose arm revolving on swivel bearings, ten inches below the ceiling. The arm has an automatic shut-off, and it is possible to get anything from a full stream of water to a small trickle. The long arm is supported by a shorter one, which takes the strain off the bearings and insures against leaks.

W. R. BROOKS.

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The New Books

The Summer Crop of Verse

CONFIRMED travelers, and indeed most people with a longing for a sight of strange ports and countries still unvisited, are quite likely to enjoy an odd volume by Robert C. Brown called *Nomadness* (Dodd, Mead, $2). It is far from being a serious volume, and equally far from being poetry; but those not repelled by a mockingly youthful style or a *vers-libre* kind of printing will laugh with Mr. Brown at what he has seen and heard in his extensive travels around the world. Mr. Brown is a brash young person with a ready wit and a way of hitting off famous foreign places in a series of short passages which are full of acute observation. He writes mostly about the less-featured side of travel—the side never mentioned by steamship folders or managers of Cook's Tours or eloquent foreign exponents of *Tourisme*. You may call it the seamy side, but not all of it is seamy. Throughout the pages you will find excellent and appreciative descriptions of places, types, and activities, of methods of travel, and of the color and atmosphere of familiar and unfamiliar lands, all told in a slap-dash sort of way, with considerable charm.

Among a group of new first volumes of poetry there are two, both by very young women, which stand out because their authors are working hard to write good poetry. One of these volumes is *Blue Harvest,* by Frances M. Frost (Houghton Mifflin, $2.50), and the other is *Mirror Images,* by Dorothe Bendon (Horace Liveright, $2). Miss Frost's work has appeared in a quantity of periodicals, and is for the most part musically written, graceful in form and manner, and direct in statement. It makes a pleasing impression but on the whole too slight a one. The rather tenuous subject-matter gives the feeling that this young poet is at present mainly concerned with how and not with what she writes. When she learns to balance her technical ability with an equal amount of thought and feeling, her work will grow into something of more than decorative importance.

The Bendon volume, richly introduced by Gertrude Atherton, is the work of a Montana woman in her early twenties, a person of talent and of classic training and much interest in classic subjects. Miss Bendon wrestles with large ideas, and for this she is to be praised. Sometimes her work comes out smoothly as poetry, more often it emerges twisted or raw or inverted from her struggle, in which she is not always the victor. The impressive thing about her is the fact that she thinks; and some time, if she perfects her technique, abandons the peculiar as her genre, and digests her words, she may very well reach a prominent place in letters.

Any one who cares for German lyric poetry, or wants to know something about it, will find a new volume, Number 13 of the Hogarth Lectures on Literature Series, published by Harcourt, Brace and Company, just exactly what he needs. The book, *German Lyric Poetry* (Harcourt, Brace, $1.25) was written by Norman Macleod, and covers work of the Minnesingers and Folksingers and other lyricists before Goethe, then the "Great Age" of Goethe, Schiller, the Romantic poets and Heine; and finally the age of lyric writers since Heine, comprising poetry of the middle Nineteenth Century and of the last fifty years. Each chapter is written in the manner of a lecture, with illustrative material in German followed by metrical English translations. Altogether it forms a most interesting volume of great value to students and teachers, and sufficiently broad in its scope to be of general interest, showing as it does the progressive development of an important literary form. The German selections are well-chosen, and the author has worked them over into characteristic English verse which conveys with remarkable success the feeling of the originals. German verse is notably hard to translate into English verse, and Norman Macleod has made all his translations sound as if they were not translations at all—which is saying a great deal for his own skill and ability as a poet.

The Book of American Negro Poetry edited by James Weldon Johnson (Harcourt, Brace & Co., $2) and first published in 1922, has just been brought up to date in a new edition containing much added material. The volume, with

Most Discussed Books

Fiction

Father, by Elizabeth: Doubleday, Doran. The daughter of a novelist escapes for adventures of her own. Gay and charming. Reviewed June 10.

The Good Earth, by Pearl S. Buck; John Day. A simple and dignified story of a Chinese family and their devotion to the land. Reviewed March 18.

Years of Grace, by Margaret Ayer Barnes; Houghton Mifflin. A detached and clear picture of fifty years with their changing influences. Pulitzer prize novel. Reviewed July 2, 1930.

The Sixth Journey, by Alice Grant Rosman: Minton, Balch. Grown-up love and a waif who finds a home at last in a charming romance with an English setting. Reviewed July 1.

Ships of Youth, by Maud Diver: Houghton Mifflin. A story of Anglo-Indian life in which characters whom Miss Diver has previously introduced attempt to "live happily ever after." Reviewed June 24.

Non-Fiction

Death and Taxes, by Dorothy Parker: Viking. Reviewed June 24.

The American Black Chamber, by Herbert O. Yardley: Bobbs Merrill. Memoirs colored with sensational disclosures of the Cryptographic Bureau established by the author during the War. Reviewed in this issue.

My Experiences in the World War, by John J. Pershing: Stokes. At the front and behind the line from the point of view of the American commander. Reviewed May 6.

Fatal Interview, by Edna St. Vincent Millay: Harper. This exquisite sonnet sequence is the best of all Miss Millay's distinguished work. Reviewed April 29.

More Boners, by Dr. Seuss and A. Abingdon: Viking. A weaker sequel to **Boners,** with more of the same.

From the jacket of "The Red Fog Lifts" by Albert Muldavin (Appleton)

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old and new prefaces, and with biographies of all the poets represented, is a good hand-book for the average reader. Unfortunately it is not a collection of the best Negro poetry. With every one so fully represented, there is all too little space given to the more important poets, and these latter are often badly represented, with work which is not their best. The finest poems of Countée Cullen cannot be found here, nor the most moving poems of Mr. Johnson himself; so that one must surmise that he had some difficulty in obtaining the necessary permissions to the use of much that he no doubt wanted to include.

This book shows not only how well the colored race can write poetry, but above all how much Negro poetry needs the accompanying music that belongs with all verse of the "blues" type. A few of these Negro authors have been writing poetry intended to stand alone, without any musical theme to back it up; but more have been leaning, as they wrote their words, upon the inner melody needed to point their striking rhythms and give them character and meaning. It is almost impossible to read the "blues" poetry without inventing or imagining the voice of a singer bearing it along. Only the most intellectual of these writers have been able to write poetry which is self-sufficient, with the necessary music inherent in the words, without reference to voice or instrument.

The two remaining volumes of this review are selections from the works of William Vaughn Moody and of Edwin Arlington Robinson. Robert Morss Lovett has edited the *Selected Poems of William Vaughn Moody* (Houghton Mifflin, $2.50), and written for it a brilliant and illuminating introduction in which he traces the life of Moody, and includes some letters and a good deal of personal material in the way of conversations and experiences with friends. The fine directness of Lovett is in striking contrast to the self-conscious, grandiose and pompous poetry of Moody, and above all to the Moody letters, which now more than ever seem to have been written not so much to convey news as to be read, quoted and admired. Moody had a great place not many years ago, at the end of a century which made the most of high-sounding abstraction and elaborate metaphor. Now that we have gone on to a more direct and natural age, all this verbiage sounds empty, and the great Moody seems not so great, except in those passages where he forgot himself and the writing of "purple patches," and got down to real and normal affairs.

Read after Moody, the Robinson book *Poems of Edwin Arlington Robinson*, selected, with a preface, by Bliss Perry, Macmillan, $2.25) may sound complex but it never sounds pompous and empty. Professor Perry has gathered together a goodly collection of Robinson's shorter poems and sonnets, and has added extensive passages from the longer works. The book will give any new reader an excellent idea of the range and quality of this fine poet's work; but it will appeal less to the confirmed reader who will resent the sight of passages snatched from the best of the longer volumes, and set here all together to give a short-cut to a knowledge of Robinson. We can only hope that the first taste of some of this really great work will lead each new reader into demanding the whole of the longer poems, and not allow him to be satisfied with excerpts, however well-chosen.

BERNICE KENYON.

The Week's Reading

"PORTRAITS IN MINIATURE," by Lytton Strachey (Harcourt, Brace, $2.50). Under this title are grouped twelve biographical sketches of shapes from the backwaters of English and French letters; and to them is added a separate section, *Six English Historians*, with short essays on Hume, Froude, Macaulay, Gibbon, Carlyle and Creighton. The second section is, as criticism, the most valuable part of the book. The method which Strachey uses in these short sketches may be described by a quotation from his paper on John Aubrey, seventeenth century biographer. "A biography," writes Strachey, "should be either as long as Boswell's or as short as Aubrey's. The method of enormous and elaborate accretion which produced the *Life of Johnson* is excellent, no doubt; but, failing that, let us have no half measures; let us have the pure essentials—a vivid image, on a page or two, without explanations, transitions, commentaries, or padding." This is what Strachey, in these sketches, gives us.

The results are uneven. A brilliant essay, full of gusto and charm, is followed by a dullish one. I believe that the papers were written for English and American weeklies, and some of them have a slightly forced air of work done on time and with little impulse—but never of skimped, shoddy or unprepared-for work. The sketch of Boswell, the most important figure among the subjects of the *Portraits in Miniature*, though deft and amusing, adds nothing to one's knowledge of or interest in the Johnsonian biographer. On the other hand, the Président de Brosses, who dared to beard Voltaire, and Sir John Harrington, seventeenth century poetaster and inventor of the water-closet, come to life in Strachey's hands. The sketches in *Six English Historians*, although more substantial, are also uneven, and range from the papers on Carlyle and Macaulay, as brilliant and provocative as they are brief, to the meandering and inconsequential ones on Froude and Creighton.

Strachey may often be read for information (provided that one remembers, always, that he is a selector, choosing a point of view and using such material as will support it); he may *always* be read for pleasure. In grace and wit he has only one peer among contemporary biographers, his compatriot, Harold Nicholson. Turn again to his sketch of Aubrey. Of him, Strachey says that "with his odd old alchemy" he "transmuted a few handfuls of orts and relics into golden life," and that "he had an unfailing eye for what was interesting, and he possessed—it was almost inevitable in those days—a natural gift of style." Change that "almost inevitable" to "very rare" and you have a sentence which some future biographer of the lesser permanent figures in English letters may well apply to Lytton Strachey.

FRANCES LAMONT ROBBINS.

"SEEING RED. Behind the Scenes in Russia Today," by Eve Garrette Grady (Brewer, Warren & Putnam, $2).

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Here is a book by an American woman who was run out of the country for telling a joke at Stalin's expense in *The Saturday Evening Post*. Spite books can be very amusing but this is an exception. Mrs. Grady's husband is an American engineer who was under contract with the Soviet Government as specialist in the coal fields. Being journalistically inclined she wrote the low-down on Russia for America's premier weekly journal and was given a one-way trip over the Soviet border in consequence. The incident has created publicity for her book and will encourage acceptance of her views.

Mrs. Grady doesn't like the Communist system, food tickets, waiting in line, secret police terrorism, forced labor, liquidation of kulaks, sex freedom, irreligion, inefficiency, *verbotens*, and all the rest of the paraphernalia of militant Communism. For that, nobody can blame her. It is doubtful that the Communists like it themselves. Her book is a long, and often amusing, string of observations, comments and incidents of life in Red Russia, some of which are well worth knowing. For example, one expects to see a surge of American "specialists" to Moscow when one reads that the Soviet marriage and divorce system makes it possible for American engineers to take unto themselves legal concubines while "specializing" for the Five-Year Plan. Tales of bootlegging food and other commodities emphasize the point that human nature is generally capable of finding a way around most official ordinances, even in Russia.

However, Mrs. Grady seems to miss the real point about Russia. That point is, not that Russia is under a despotism, but that that despotism is actually putting across the most impressive economic integration in world history, that the Communists are using despotism as a means to a preordained economic and political end, and that, in consequence, Soviet Russia is today the most dynamic factor in world politics and world economics. She is out to alter and has already affected the economic and political status quo.

Beyond saying that the Five-Year Plan will be completed and that "America will have to submit with what grace she can to the loss of her cotton, grain and wheat markets abroad; perhaps to the disruption of industry at home," and that when Stalin says world-revolution he means it, Mrs. Grady omits the underlying trend and purpose of the whole Red racket. It is as though a nice, well-meaning, pacifistic, middle-western dame were given a bomb-proof view of the German drive of March, 1918, and reported solely upon the shortage of shower baths in the trenches and upon the cruel inefficiency of war in general, without glimpsing the strategic principles or the political purposes which made the gigantic German effort an historical epic. And perhaps if Mrs. Grady had written that the German rank and file despised Ludendorff and hated Hindenburg, she would have been escorted rearward from the German front almost as rapidly as she was from Russia.

JOHN CARTER.

"HATTER'S CASTLE," by A. J. Cronin (Little, Brown, $2.50). This is a full-flavored novel of the three-decker type. It is the story of a brutal Scotchman and of how he brought his own life down about his ears. James Brodie is a hatter in a lowland town, and "nearly as mad as one." He is a huge fellow, a bully and a devil, obsessed with delusions of grandeur, thinking himself too good for his neighbors and dreaming of the time when he can throw his position in their teeth. He browbeats his wife to death, drives his eldest daughter to the edge of hopeless tragedy, ruins his business, takes to drink, loses his blowsy mistress to his wastrel son, and, finally, pinning his highest hopes on his youngest child, works her to madness and suicide. This, of course, is melodrama. A moment's reflection will show you that the old-fashioned novel and, I venture to say, the novel which is most commonly cherished and reread, is built upon a melodramatic plot. But the melodramatic plot, strong as it is, will never make a novel live unless it is the framework for living characterizations. The characterizations in *Hatter's Castle* are excellent. Brodie and his family and the few outsiders who play large and small parts in the story are all solid, believable, differentiated in action and speech. They all make certain appeals to the emotions. Scene after scene in the long book strikes the mind and fixes itself in the memory. If the novel had the relief of simple humor, it would truly merit superlatives. There is humor in it, but of a twisted, bitter sort, found in the pitiless sharpness of some of the scenes, such as that in which his bullying son causes Grandma Brodie to lose her false teeth which scatter, as he graciously says, like pearls before swine, and that in which Brodie's oafish son, preparing for his departure to India, sits on his bed laboriously picking out tunes on a mandolin so that he may be prepared to serenade harem beauties on tropic nights. *Hatter's Castle* holds the interest from the first of its six hundred and five pages to the last.

So far it is the season's most welcome dish to lovers of solid, meaty fiction.

FRANCES LAMONT ROBBINS.

"THE Rise and Fall of Carol Banks," by Elliott White Springs (Doubleday, Doran & Company, $2.50). Mr. Springs' hero, like himself, was a flying ace in the War. Banks was also, according to Mr. Springs, an ace of hearts and a bartender possessed of the divine spark of genius. During his eighteen months of patriotic service he only attained perfect sobriety for three days. He brought down many German pilots and still more French nurses, dancers, and daughters of joy, in flames. The War, for Carol Banks as doubtless for other lucky young brutes, was a dazzling field day. Mud and murder could almost be forgotten in the general holocaust of vitality. In the same twenty-four hours, you saw your best friend shot to fragments by a marauding Fokker, landed your own machine riddled with bullets, stole the general's Rolls-Royce roadster, and ended up at the New York Bar in Paris with your head under the table. Mr. Springs adopts a somewhat needlessly confused form for recounting these high-pitched adventures, the majority of which must surely have been his own. The last part of his book, bearing on Carol Banks' road back to normalcy after the Armistice, savors of an all-night Hemingway orgy, without the underlying Hemingway sardonics. There are, however, a few battles in the air and a few purple leaves to Paris which could not fail to brighten your picture of madcap, venturesome, American youth.

VIRGILIA PETERSON ROSS.

Behind the Blurbs

THE DECAMERON, in the translation of J. M. Rigg, is now published complete in 2 vols. in Everyman's Library. ☘ ☘ ☘ *The Omnibus Jules Verne*[1] contains four of that author's most popular stories: *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea, Around the World in 80 Days, The Blockade Runners,* and *From the Earth to the Moon.* ☘ ☘ ☘ *The Company of Shadows*[2] is a somewhat confused tale of a sort of vigilance committee in London, who first punished crooks that the law couldn't reach, and then took up crime itself. The mysterious Stephen Parrox and his daughter,

The publishers of **Following the Prairie Frontier,** by Seth K. Humphrey, were erroneously stated in our issue of July 8. This book is a publication of the University of Minnesota Press.

The Mirrors of 1932 (Brewer, Warren & Putnam) and **Washington Merry-Go-Round** (Liveright) are discussed in the editorial on page 361 of this issue.

1. Lippincott, $3.00.
2. By J. M. Walsh: Brewer & Warren, $2.00.

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Mike the reporter, Inspector Trent, Willowby Wiseman, and various other characters are extremely active but the reader can seldom figure out what they're really up to. The author conceals the twists of his plot so successfully that the denouement is superfluous. ❧ ❧ ❧ Our old friend, Col. Gethryn, wasn't much upset when in *The Polferry Riddle*[3], Eve Hale-Starford was found in bed with her throat cut and not a clue in sight. But when a short time later Eve's sister fell over a cliff in her car, and Hale-Starford's young cousin was drowned, and attempts were made on the life of Susan Kerr, who also had been in the house on the night of Eve's death, the Col. decided he'd have to give Scotland Yard a hand. We're a little sorry he did, for, as it turned out, the mystery wasn't worthy of him. But though the story develops a bad limp in the last chapter, it is exciting and entertaining, and we think you'll enjoy it. ❧ ❧ ❧ Things looked pretty black for young Corinna Lesley when a gent with a punctured heart was found in her flat. Lucky for her that among her friends, who were a pretty night-club lot, was Philip Cavanagh, who in his efforts to prove her innocent took the law into his own hands and used modified third degree methods on several crooks to get the information he wanted. We like Philip and hope to meet him again. And for once, in a thriller, you don't have to keep your bottle of Mothersill's at your elbow to get through the love story part. *Call the Yard*[4] is the story's name.

WALTER R. BROOKS.

3. By Philip Macdonald: Crime Club, $1.00.
4. By Hugh Clevely: Crime Club, $1.00.

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Music

Notable New Recordings

IT'S QUEER, but the releases of the major phonograph companies do seem to go in parallel channels. If one brings out some Sibelius, so do the others, if not simultaneously, immediately afterwards. A composer may be neglected for a long time and then suddenly at least two of said major companies will issue handsome album sets of his music—often of the same compositions.

This week I was the recipient from Victor and Columbia of an album of Chopin from each. Fortunately, however, there is no overlapping on the material itself, and even more fortunately the pianists are probably the two leading living interpreters of the unhappy Gallicised Pole—Ignaz Friedman and Alfred Cortot. Chopin, of course, while far from blissful in his mortal existence, has been made the subject of a most unpleasant sort of immortality—all bad pianists try to play his music. For Columbia Friedman plays twelve mazurkas on four twelve-inch records[1], and Cortot renders eight ballades for Victor on the same number of sides[2]. In both cases the playing and the recording are first class in every particular. If it's a question of a choice between the sets, the brochure in the Columbia album should clinch it. Among many equally valuable facts in it we learn that so far as Chopin and George Sand are concerned "the reasonable supposition would seem to be that, the two being highly organized human beings of normal instincts, their intimacy took the course which such intimacies usually take."

Victor continue their policy of having radio favorites sung by artists who are usually above that sort of thing. John Charles Thomas gives us *Home on the Range* and *Trees*[3], and I must say that there is no trace of condescension in his rendition. His fine baritone is well recorded, too, in both. However, I still prefer Vernon Dahlhart on the former ditty. I don't think it *should* be sung by an operatic baritone, but perhaps I'm just prejudiced.

A lovely little violin solo record is given us by a fiddler previously unknown to me but of whom I hope to hear more. On a ten-inch Brunswick disk Mishel Piastro plays Albert Spalding's transcription of Schubert's *Hark! Hark! The Lark*, and *Poem*, by Fibich, the prolific Czech[4], with great beauty of tone. That reminds me: why haven't we had any records from Albert Spalding himself lately?

O. C.-T.

1. Columbia Masterworks, Album No. 159.
2. Victor, Album M. 94.
3. Victor, 1525.
4. Brunswick, 15221.

The list of ten best-selling books printed on Page 376 is compiled from reports sent to the Outlook each week by wire from the following representative bookshops:

BRENTANO'S, *New York;* SCRANTOMS, INC., *Rochester;* KORNER & WOOD, *Cleveland;* SCRUGGS, VANDERVOORT & BARNEY, *St. Louis;* KENDRICK BELLAMY CO., *Denver;* TEOLIN PILLOT CO., *Houston;* PAUL ELDER & CO., *San Francisco;* NORMAN REMINGTON CO., *Baltimore;* EMERY BIRD THAYER, *Kansas City;* MILLER'S BOOK STORE, *Atlanta;* BULLOCK'S, *Los Angeles;* STEWART KIDD, *Cincinnati;* J. K. GILL CO., *Portland, Oregon;* JOHN WANAMAKER, *Philadelphia;* THE OLD CORNER BOOK STORE INC., *Boston, Massachusetts.*

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From the Life

Sure

EVERY MORNING (like this morning) he got up and thought with satisfaction—another day! The sun might be shining or the streets full of rain, it made no difference to him. He was ready for work. His wife would have breakfast on the kitchen table by the time he could be dressed. The lunch pail would be closed and waiting for his hand. And all the children, each one half a head shorter down to the baby, would be like little bottles corked tight and ready to explode all at the same moment with, "Good-bye! Good-bye Papa! Papa, good-bye!"

Every morning was just the same. That was how it should be. A man could make life as regular as his own habits, he thought soberly to himself, trudging through the early morning streets. Oh yes! he must be careful; he must not run away with idle wishes; he must be steady and patient; with every week a little money saved. Then life could not scare a man. That is what he would like to tell them when they complained, with dark looks and bitter words, working beside him on the tracks. Not to be scared of life you must be ready for it—you must look ahead. What if every year or so a new baby comes? There should be money in the savings bank. Can a man save money if he is discontent? If he throws away his job? If he is idle? No (he would like to say to them)—look at himself. In twenty-one years he has never missed a day's work!

As he trudged to work every morning he liked to think about his record and the money in the bank. As he made his way home in the evening (like this evening) he liked to shake his head all over again at the chances people took with life. This one, jumping into the middle of traffic; that one, running after evil companionship; another, not caring where he went, walking with no purpose. The world was full of accidents and crime. What was it that they did not do? Killing—stealing—breaking into honest people's houses. And he thought, nearing home, that a man should learn to be ready for life; with money in the bank and a pistol in the house. Like himself.

Every evening, too, was just the same; and that was right. The supper plain and good. The children in bed early; for what would running the streets get them? Only this evening, pulling off his shoes and stretching out his arms, he was more content than usual, probably. And smiled at his wife. Did she smile back again before she turned her head away? He couldn't be sure. He looked again and saw the way her black hair fell against her rounded shoulders. With all those children she could look so young—her face sullen one minute and laughing the next. Like a young girl! And he remembered, without knowing why, that soon he would be going to the bank again. And without knowing why he got up and walked over to the bureau, thinking, well now, just one look before he slept. But the bank book wasn't there.

WHAT MUST have happened—though afterwards it was so hard to remember—was probably something like this. She must have turned a strange look on him; one that he had never seen before, that made her look like an outsider breaking suddenly into his home. A look of fear and defiance—a look that was desperate and contemptuous, and terrified; that so startled him he scarcely saw the bank book which she flung him.

Still with the blood burning his face, and his eyes, hot and unbelieving, lifting to look at her and dropping to the book in his hands, he saw what she had done.

Nothing was real. Nothing of this could ever be happening in his life. It was as if he were watching a play.

"What have you done with it?" he heard some one asking in a thick, threatening voice. That was the man. "What have you done with the other half?"

Then he heard the woman's answer. Given it away? Given it away—to—to—He tried not to understand the name. "You wouldn't have given it to him," the man was shouting "unless—"

And he could see the woman nod, with her eyes fixed on him bright and terrified—then laugh out wildly, an insane look on her face. A stranger—some one who had smashed his home—

He had spent his life getting ready to defend himself. Now he stood and heard a sound that split his brain. After it he stood alone in a terrible quietness and saw that he had killed her. The pistol, which had certainly been in the drawer beside him, hung smoking from his own hand.

He tried to speak out loud—to tell her something—to tell himself—that he had to be sure . . . . sure . . . . of what? For until the end of the world now there was nothing to be sure of any more.

IBBY HALL.

The Spotlight on Sports

(Continued from Page 372)

for example, ridiculed by forecasters as a hugging contest, saw the good-looking southerner battered into a semi-coma, a climax that must have satisfied the cash customers.

There was ample reason for journalistic skepticism. Stribling had been a confirmed clincher throughout his ring career. The ex-circus acrobat had a wrestling complex. After one or two leads and parries he would grab his opponent around the body and hang on like a leech. From the ringside Stribling seemed to be whispering: "Have you heard the one about Pat and Mike?"

Courage has many facets. In the air, piloting his streamlined biplane, Stribling is known as a daring pilot. He loops, barrel rolls, spins, spirals and dives like an Immelmann. Five forced landings, four negotiated safely, testify to Stribling's nerve and poise in a pinch. Once the padded mitts were laced on, however, the Georgian was wont to turtle shell. He had the reputation for flinching from bodily punishment. He clinched to avoid "taking it." Stung by the taunts of faint-heartedness, Stribling reversed all his previous tactics at Cleveland. He didn't hold at all. He went in punching and he went out the same way. Floored for a nine count, he gamely regained his feet. He was still on his feet, though helpless to defend himself, when the referee called a halt.

Von Elm's Record

NOBODY in the 1931 Inverness field duplicated Ted Ray's four birdie 3's at the dog-leg seventh hole, but Von Elm made a record of his own at the 325-yard home hole, an easy four but a difficult three. The business man golfer's cards for this finishing hole read: 4-3-3-3-4-3-4-4. Four birdies out of eight tries is Robin

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Hood marksmanship, and two of those 3's, remember, were holed in a crisis.

▶▶ *The Weather*

HOT? A golf ball driven by August Nordone actually melted as it lay on the fairway. It mushroomed when Nordone played a full iron.

GEORGE TREVOR.

Mr. Woodcock Sees America

(Continued from Page 363)

chiefs who preceded him and who seemed always to be in hot water. He has taken prohibition enforcement out of the newspapers, that is, in the way it used to be in the newspapers. His administration has seen no sensational stories about dry agents shooting innocent people. He told the agents they would have to stop shooting and he meant it. Unlike the roly-poly and amiable Roy A. Haynes, the first of the enforcers, he does not throw out his chest and tell beautiful stories about prohibition being a raging success. He says that his bureau is more efficient, that the agents are better trained. Both are true. He has built up an *esprit de corps,* which is certainly an achievement among prohibition enforcers. He has established schools for the agents and they have their own service newspaper where they may see their names occasionally.

Mr. Woodcock is a reserve army officer. He goes off to camp every summer to keep up with things military and here becomes in reality "Colonel Woodcock." He makes prohibition enforcement a game. Disregarding the small fry, the speakeasies, the casual citizen violator—in other words, the guerillas—he trains his army upon the big bootlegger, the so-called "rum rings," and the agents get a kick out of tracking down the "big shots." It's fun and when it's over there's something accomplished, something which approaches the heroic.

His "winning program," as he calls it, calls for well-trained agents, concentration upon the big operator and the large sources of supply, and education in temperance to wean the average citizen, if possible, away from his occasional drink. He is not a fanatic. He is what once was called "a temperance man." You have to like Mr. Woodcock, and perhaps it's his naïveté as much as anything else.

Before he went on his "inspection trip" through the northwest, he was told by a newspaperman in the presence of other newspapermen that there were supposed to be 286 speakeasies in a certain city out there. When he came back

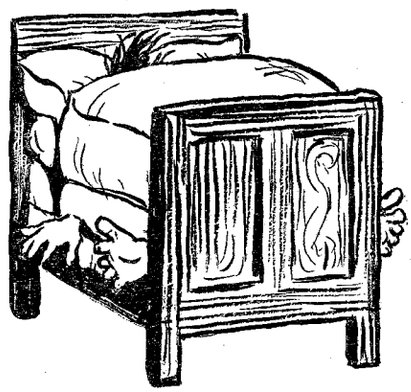
(Continued on Page 382)

▶▶ Prose and Worse ◀◀

WE SAID something last week about the German bed. It is an institution which, we think, deserves more attention than travel writers have given it. For no travel books we have read have said a word about it.

We will give you first the specifications for building a German bed, and then our method of making it habitable. The framework is similar to that of an American bed. Upon this is superimposed a mattress. Here the likeness ceases. Upon the north end of the mattress is placed a smaller, wedge-shaped piece of mattress, whose purpose is to raise the head into a semi-reclining position. The lower sheet is then put on. There is no upper sheet. Instead of it, a down quilt is buttoned into a linen envelope, folded in a complicated manner too difficult to describe, and placed (not tucked in) on the lower sheet. Two square down pillows are then put at the head, and a large feather bed drawn over the rest of the bed. Also, a bolster can be added, at will.

Now to find yourself confronted with such a bed on a hot summer night is somewhat disconcerting. It's of no use to call the maid and explain how you want the bed made in the future. It's against all the tradition of the Fatherland to prepare a bed in any other way. If anything is done, you must do it yourself, and you must do it every night. Our method was first to remove the wedge, one pillow, the bolster and the feather bed and pile them in a corner. They make a pretty big pile in a small room, but you'll never persuade the maid to take them away. She hasn't any place to put them either. Then extract the quilt from its linen cover and use the latter for a sheet. After that—if you're not too exhausted to sleep at all—you will rest very comfortably.



Always supposing, of course, that you have provided yourself with a pair of sound-proof ear plugs. For one of the worst features of a trip to Germany is the impossibility of getting any sleep in any German hotel room which has a window on the street. To one accustomed to the comparative quiet of New York streets the noise is appalling. Perhaps, in view of the number of bicycles on the streets, it really is necessary for the German motorist to blow his horn lustily before coming to a corner. But it is not necessary for him to blow it in the middle of the block, or when he sees a red-haired girl, or a man with long whiskers, or just as a salute to the cars he passes. It is not necessary for German motor-horn manufacturers to turn out horns that can be heard for six miles on a foggy night. And what we think of German motorcycles and their accursed riders even James Joyce would hesitate to put into print. The popular make of motorcycle in Germany today is the noisiest one. We don't know which it is, but that's the one. And the popular sport among the riders, as far as we can discover, is for each, just on the stroke of midnight, to select the quietest block he knows and then to tune up his engine. Even the country roads are full of din and racket, for the sight of anything moving on the horizon is a signal for the motorist to blow seven long and four short blasts.

Of course Germany is not alone in this. Sufferers from other Continental cities tell the same tale of sleep shattered and ear drums rent. But until European cities wake up to the fact that they have a noise problem, the best room in the hotel is not the big one with lots of fine air and a view, but the little stuffy one on the back alley.

And we believe that a good deal of the indifference which many American travelers feel toward Europe can be traced directly to this one thing. The beauty and picturesqueness of a foreign town, seen through eyes bleared with lack of sleep, and passed on for interpretation to a brain fogged and aching with fatigue, is nothing to become lyrical about. You can't lounge in a cafe, or look at pictures, if you haven't slept well.

Europe wants the American tourist. On the whole, and particularly in Germany, she treats him well. And the tourist accommodates himself to a different way of living. He doesn't expect everything to be just as it is at home—indeed he would be disappointed if it were, for it is the differences that make travel worth while. But one thing he gets at home he must have when he is abroad—his sleep.

WALTER R. BROOKS.

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Mr. Woodcock Sees America

(Continued from Page 381)

and was questioned about that particular place it turned out that he had not stopped there. But he did go to Reno. The enforcement problem there, he said upon his return, was no different from anywhere else. His agents told him, he explained, that they had driven the open saloon behind "barred doors." He was asked if this was all they intended to do. He did not reply directly but pointed out that Nevada had only a small population, and, well, agents were needed in other places, too. It was at this time that he said the speakeasy was not the concern of the federal government, but was a problem of local agencies. When this story was noised about by the newspapers, with headlines saying that the government would not bother the speakeasies, he sent out instructions to his agents advising them that the speakeasies were in their domain. He knows, though, that nothing much can be done about them, and since then has emphasized again that it's the big fellows, those whom it is lots of fun to track down, that the government is after.

MR. WOODCOCK convinces those who have seen many dry directors come and go that he is doing about as well with prohibition as can be expected of any man. Look over his record. There have been, in round numbers, 100,000 arrests during his year in office from a total of nearly 60,000 cases. Several persons often are involved in one case. This is because his agents have been fairly effective against the big liquor syndicates. There were, for instance, thirty such large cases involving, each of them, several persons during the month of May alone. As proof that his agents are becoming better trained, that they are making their cases stick, he cites the record showing a total of around 54,000 cases docketed out of the 60,000 that his agents have made. Fines are getting lighter and jail sentences longer. This means, so he interprets it, that the dry squadron now is reaching the "big fellow" and the "big fellow," in consequence, is no longer above the law and is going to jail.

Here are some of the spoils of Colonel Woodcock's one year of prohibition war: 20,000 stills and 31,000 beer fermenters seized; 4,500,000 gallons of beer and 1,700,000 gallons of spirits captured; 7,320 automobiles confiscated; 58 boats and launches taken from their operators because they were used for running liquor.

The cost of Mr. Woodcock's dry activities for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1931, was nearly $10,000,000. His own department had total appropriations of $9,623,390 but returned $100,000 to the Treasury, making a net total cost of $9,523,390. All the prohibition activities of the various government bureaus for the fiscal year 1930-1931 cost an estimated total of $35,000,000.

The Department of Justice expenditures attributable to prohibition enforcement were about $10,000,000. The cost of the Dry Navy operated by the Coast Guard, with other activities, was about $15,000,000, and the prohibition enforcement work of the Customs Service added another $2,000,000. Altogether this makes a grand total of $36,523,390. Deducting about $5,500,000 in fines imposed leaves a net cost for dry enforcement activities of about $31,000,000. Inasmuch as these are conservative estimates, and inasmuch as there are hidden costs not easily ascertainable, it seems fair to estimate that the government's prohibition enforcement activities for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1931, were about $35,000,000.

But one wonders whether the next year, even with the game made more exciting because of the larger army he will have—Congress gave him 500 more agents—will be so entrancing now that he has seen the country and his sightseeing days are over. There is something about travel.

New Styles in Medical Quacks

(Continued from Page 365)

woman, and because these miracles are commonplace, the average individual is quite willing to believe in anything which is called a scientific miracle. Dr. Akbistro was an astute enough crowd psychologist to bring his audience to a high state of credulous expectancy. When he gravely bit into his healing olio, turning his face so that the entire audience could see the lemon juice drip to the floor, he explained that mouth watering on the part of his audience was the result of "primary medical suggestion."

From then on the audience was his. A girl limped on the platform and he sent her away walking naturally. A man came up who stuttered. Dr. Akbistro held him firmly by the shoulders, constantly reiterating in a high monotone, "You don't stutter! You don't stutter!" with the man repeating the words after him. The orchestra played, first slowly, then faster. Two or three women became almost hysterical by the time Dr. Akbistro gave the man a sudden twist and then in the dead silence which followed said in a slow, deep voice, "You are cured! You do not stutter. Tell me that you are cured!" Tremendous applause nearly drowned out the patient's halting words, "I am cured. I do not stutter! God be praised!"

The rest of the program consisted of a series of less exciting public consultations. A number of men and women appeared on the stage, one by one, and told Dr. Akbistro their complaints. The eminent doctor would proceed to advise them in full view of the audience, usually suggesting that they come to his offices for further treatment. At the end of the two hours a short man with curly hair stepped before us and suavely announced: "Dr. Akbistro realizes that there are many here tonight who would prefer to have private consultations with him. As a special favor to you he will, therefore, reduce his regular $15 fee for half an hour's private consultation to $5. If you will raise your hand our nurse will take down your names and addresses and arrange the time of the appointments."

I tried to count the hands. There seemed at least 100 who made appointments that evening. Unfortunately, the eminent Dr. Akbistro eventually overplayed his hand. He became so bold in his advertisements that he was finally brought to the attention of J. W. Davidson, Inspector of the California State Board of Medicine, who found that the great Akbistro was a former vaudeville performer from Oakland.

The most reputable hotels open up their lecture halls to these charlatans. Only a week after the Akbistro imbroglio a distinguished gentleman, direct from a tour in the middle west, descended upon the Pacific Coast with his system for staying ever young by "Keeping the Glands in the Head Active through Muscular Movements of the Face." His system was simple. He

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merely stood in front of an adoring audience and made a series of grotesque faces which were supposed to stretch the face muscles. After his free lecture one of his barkers sold a twenty-page mimeographed booklet for $2.50. This lecture was given in the very best hotels in every city that lay along his route.

"Doesn't it tire you?" I asked him one night as he was packing to leave for the next city on his schedule itinerary. He showed his surprise. "Tire me? Not when you've been a mandoline clown in a tent med-show making funny faces six nights a week for ten years straight!"

All of these scientific spielers have the same general system. Their technique is simple and efficacious. They work the standard free lecture racket hinting at sensational medical discoveries in order to draw a crowd. After they have attracted their audience it is an easy matter to dispose of their nostrums through the old fear appeal. They gain credence because they surround themselves with a mysterious scientific glamour. Although it may change tomorrow, at present the "free lecture" offer is the big hook in all the advertisements of these scientific spielers.

I talked to one eminent young mental-thought healer and he informed me, in a burst of confidence, after practically ruining one bottle of Peter Heering Kirsebauer Liqueur taken by myself direct from a foreign boat, that there were at least three hundred scientific spielers now working the boards. There are more than twelve on the Pacific Coast alone who are drawing from $15,000 to $50,000 and over a year, basing these figures on attendance averages at their "lectures," and at their newest invention—their "free lecture clinics." The middle-western states, and especially Chicago, are filled with them, all profiting. The depression proved a bonanza for their business. The mental-healer told me, "I find that the average large city—excepting New York, which for some reason is a poor town for our trade, is visited by from two to twenty spielers a month, and they pull in big audiences."

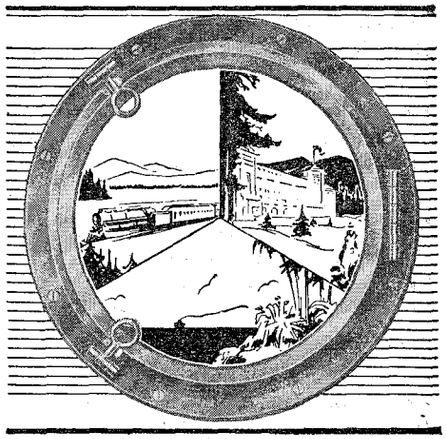
There are at least twenty spielers scattered over the country who are making small fortunes by peddling their nostrums and quack-inventions over the radio. A few have even profited enough to own their own stations. Only in the Atlantic states are the scientific spielers still scarce; this is because they originated the new technique in the West and because they simply have not had the time to harvest the rich eastern markets. Despite the virtuous disclaimers about not accepting patent-medicine advertising, I know of few newspapers in the western and middle-western territory who do not help to beat the publicity drum for these Cagliostros.

Only a few spielers like Dr. Akbistro are unfortunate enough to make statements which are so patently untrue as to cause an arrest. The hundreds of quack health and scientific lecturers now gathering in the shekels from the Pacific to the Mississippi are practically immune from legal interference as they are clever and *imply* that they can cure, instead of saying in black and white that they *do* cure. They can only be brought before the authorities when they make the latter statement.

Even if they do slip and make illegal claims, so many new medical discoveries are announced each week that it is almost impossible to detect the deliberately dishonest from the true. When even two such cancer investigators as Humber and Coffey are denounced by New York cancer specialists, when the homeopaths openly defile the allopaths, when the chiropractors and osteopaths are legalized in some states and outlawed in others, is it any wonder that the average man cannot distinguish the medical charlatan from the authentic medical scientist? Because of this confusion the vast and vague field of curative science has become harvest ripe for the cunning of the modernized medicine-show man.

If Old Doc Wamahoo were in business today you may be sure that he would shave his flowing moustache, polish up his grammar, buy an impeccable frock coat, and blossom out as an eminent lecturer, author, psychologist and physiotherapist with a remarkable new cure-all of his own which only costs—ladies and gentlemen—$10, or $5, if you buy tonight and take advantage of the special offer!

TRAVEL SUGGESTIONS AND INFORMATION FOR OUTLOOK READERS



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☆☆☆☆☆

For the best Remarkable Remarks contributed by Outlook readers the Outlook will award weekly prizes of $5 for the one judged best, and $2 each for as many more as may be adjudged worthy of inclusion in the column.

Entries for each week's contest close at 12 o'clock noon on the Monday of the week preceding date of publication.

All Remarkable Remarks must be direct quotations and must be accompanied by evidence of their source. If the Remarkable Remark selected by any contributor has appeared in the press, it must be accompanied by clipped evidence, showing the author of the remark and the name and date of the publication in which it appeared. If the Remarkable Remark has appeared in a book, *the title of the book and the name of its* author, together with the number of the page upon which the Remarkable Remark is to be found, must be submitted.

All Remarkable Remarks must be accompanied by a single sentence explaining why the contributor considers the contributed remark remarkable.

In case two or more contributors submit the same Remarkable Remark which is judged *worthy of any prize, the contributor whose* Remarkable Remark is accompanied by the best—briefest and wittiest—explanatory sentence will be awarded the prize.

The editors of the Outlook are the sole judges of the contest and are ineligible to compete. All contributions should be sent to the Remarkable Remarks Editor.

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